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CRITICAL EXPOSITION

OF

BAPTISM;

EMBRACING THE

MOSAIC BAPTISMS; JEWISH TRADITIONARY BAPTISMS; JOHN'S BAPTISM, AND CHRISTIAN BAPTISM:

CLEARLY ESTABLISHING THE SCRIPTURAL AUTHORITY OF

AFFUSION AND SPRINKLING,

AND OF

INFANT BAPTISM.

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PREFACE.

1. The present work is designed to contain a complete and thorough exposition of *baptism.*

Many partial expositions of this ordinance are already before the public, and some of them of considerable merit. But none have received that degree of favor which is necessary, in order to their becoming generally read; and none are generally convincing.

Believing that the scripture doctrines respecting Christian baptism, can be so expounded as to secure for them the general adoption of mankind, and thus put an end to rational controversy in regard to them; the author of the following work, has undertaken to contribute something towards the attainment of this result. How far he has succeeded, remains to be determined. He indulges the hope that his effort will so far receive the approbation of the great head of the church, and be so far in agreement with the designs and purposes of God, as to be made useful.

2. Infant baptism is intimately connected with family religion. Most families are so imperfectly informed in regard to its authority and design, that something is imperiously demanded for general circulation with respect to that branch of the subject.

The position which baptism occupies, as the sacramental seal of covenant relations subsisting between

God and man, and the unhappy diversities of opinion, among Christians, in regard to it, are additional reasons for the general and thoróugh investigation of the subject, both by the ministry and membership of the church of Christ.

3. Baptism is one of the most interesting branches of Polemic Theology.

Polemic Theology is discarded by many. But when we consider the apostolic injunction, to *contend earnestly* for the faith once delivered to the saints; and the obligation both to *observe* and *maintain* the institutions of Chris tin their purity, we are constrained to be polemical. If the doctrines of Christ met with no opposition, Polemical Theology would not be necessary. But to cease contending for the faith, while that faith is violently assailed, is the part of cowardice and treachery; and is a base abandonment of the essential principles of Christianity.

It becomes us not only to defend the institutions of Christ and to prevent their being broken down by assailants, but also to support them by sound and convincing argument, to such a degree as will carry conviction to every unbiassed mind. This has been earnestly attempted in the present work.

4. The scripture doctrines, respecting the mode and subjects of Christian baptism, must be settled, if settled at all, by argument. The *opinions* of men, unsupported by evidence, are of no weight whatever in the legitimate establishment of them.

Neither can these doctrines be safely determined from the English bible, considered independently of the inspired original. The English bible is not the inspired word of God; and has not, and cannot have the authority which belongs to the inspired original. The English bible is not a safe guide on subjects im-

perfectly understood by the translators. Translators cannot give a version of unquestionable authority, even when they understand, perfectly, the subject treated of. Still less can they do this, where they do not perfectly understand the subject. If a scholar translates according to the best of his knowledge, his version will be conformable to that knowledge, but will in no case exceed it.

The ultimate standards of appeal, on all controverted subjects in Christian theology, are the ORIGINAL SCRIPTURES, *the only inspired word of God, and the only unerring and perfect rule of Christian faith.* The best translations, possible, are imperfect and may mislead us. The opinions of the best and most learned men may be erroneous, and are, therefore, not to be implicitly trusted. But God's inspired word is entitled to our unhesitating confidence. It cannot be wrong. It cannot mislead us, if properly interpreted.

In the present work, the original word of God is constantly referred to; and in cases where the common version is supposed to be objectionable, other translations are adopted and supported by arguments capable of being appreciated by all intelligent readers.

The leading arguments contained in the following work were first published by the author in two pamphlets, one on the Mode and the other on the Subjects of Baptism, in 1838. In the present work, those arguments are more fully expanded, and the main conclusions have been strengthened by several additional arguments.

A

CRITICAL EXPOSITION

OF

BAPTISM.

CHAPTER I.

MOSAIC BAPTISMS.

Origin of Baptism.

§ 1. The earliest baptisms of which we have any particular account, are those instituted by Moses. Whether the institution of baptism had its origin in the time of Moses, or whether it came down with the system of sacrifices from the earlier patriarchs and from the commencement of time, we are not informed in the scriptures, and cannot decide from uninspired testimony. There is a tradition among the Jews, that the origin of baptism was previous to the time of Moses, and that Moses incorporated it, as he did the other religious rites of his time, in the Jewish discipline, without originating it. Though this is incapable of proof, there is no good reason for supposing the contrary. It is, therefore, not improbable, that the institution of baptism is as old as that

of sacrifices, and that both had their origin in the express appointments of God, and in the time of Adam.

Primitive title of the Mosaic Baptisms.

§2. The Mosaic baptisms are described among the Mosaic institutions, under the title of purifications. The name baptism was not applied to denote them in the Old Testament, because the Old Testament was written in Hebrew, and baptism is a word of Greek derivation. The Greek language did not begin to be used by the Israelites till several centuries after the time of Moses. The books of Moses were compiled 1451 years before Christ. The Septuagint, the earliest Greek translation of the Scriptures, was not completed till about 285 B. C., after a lapse of 1166 years from the time of Moses. The translation of the Septuagint was executed by different hands, and the different parts of it with different degrees of fidelity and ability. The Pentateuch was the first part of the Septuagint translated. It was required to be translated first, in consequence of the prominent position which the reading of it occupied in the synagogue worship. The terms adopted to denote the different Mosaic rites in the translation of the Pentateuch, would naturally be adopted, unless found objectionable, by the translators of other parts of the sacred volume.

In the Pentateuch, the Mosaic rites of cleansing are denominated purifications, not baptisms. The same modes of expression are continued throughout the old Testament, and occur occasionally in the New.

PROOF THAT THE MOSAIC PURIFICATIONS WERE BAPTISMS.

First argument from the Apocrypha.

§3. In Ecclesiasticus 34: 25, Greek Siracides, 31: 30, the word baptize is applied to denote one of the principal Mosaic purifications. Literally translated, the passage reads thus: "He that is baptized from a dead body and toucheth it again, what profit will he derive from his washing?"

Ecclesiasticus is one of the apocryphal books. It is one of the finest uninspired Jewish literary productions extant in the Greek language, and has been reckoned, by the Church of Rome, as belonging to the sacred canon.

Being baptized from a dead body is the same as being purified by baptism from the defilement contracted by touching a dead body. The baptism referred to was, evidently, the Mosaic purification from defilement, contracted by touching the dead. The passage, therefore, shows, that the Mosaic purification referred to, was a baptism according to the usage of the Jews in those times.

Second argument from the Apocrypha.

§4. In Judith 12: 7, we are told, that Judith abode in the camp of the enemy three days, "and went out in the night to the valley of Bethulia and baptized herself in the camp at a fountain of water." This baptism was connected with prayer, Judith 11: 17. "Thy servant is religious, and serveth the God of Heaven day and night. Now, therefore, my Lord,

I will remain with thee, and thy servant will go out by night to the valley, and I will pray to God."

Judith is described as an eminent Jewish saint and heroine. Her baptism was a religious rite, which does not appear to have been commanded in the Mosaic ritual, but belonged to the traditionary observances of later times. These traditionary observances were analogous to the divinely appointed ones. The divinely appointed baptisms were the purification from defilement contracted by touching a dead body, and the other analagous purifications.—§ 3.

The baptism of Judith was, undoubtedly, a ceremonial purification by means of water; probably, an uncommanded ceremony. The mode of its administration is not defined, but the circumstances of the case clearly show, that it could not have been by immersion.

1. It was performed by a woman on herself.

2. It was performed statedly in the night, and every night, in connexion with other religious exercises.

3. It was performed at a fountain.

4. It was performed at a fountain within a camp, with a hostile army around her, by whose general she was at the time entertained.

The book of Judith purports to describe transactions and events which took place during the reign of Nebuchadnezzar, king of Babylon. It is a religious historical novel, of which Judith is the heroine, and was, probably, founded on facts, as such novels generally are. It constituted a part of Jewish Greek literature previous to the time of the apostles, and illustrates the manner in which Greek words were applied to denote Jewish institutions and usages.

It shows clearly, by the case of Judith, that cere-

monial cleansings, by means of water, were denominated baptisms, as well as purifications. Judith's baptism could have been nothing else than a ceremonial religious cleansing or purification, and was doubtless analagous to those instituted by Moses.

First argument from the New Testament.

§5. The application of the term baptisms as an appropriate title of the Mosaic purifications, is also evinced by Hebrews 9: 9, 10. This passage, properly translated, reads as follows: "Which [tabernacle] has been a type to the present time, in which both oblations and sacrifices are offered, that cannot make him who performs the service perfect in respect to the conscience, being imposed with [abstinence from certain] meats and drinks and *various baptisms*, ordinances pertaining to the body, only till the time of reformation."

The original word which I have translated baptisms in the above passage, is baptismois, and ought, undoubtedly. to be rendered baptisms, not washings, as in our common bible. In the above passage, various baptisms are associated with oblations, sacrifices and distinctions of clean and unclean meats, as rites of the Mosaic dispensation. What these baptisms were, is not stated in this connexion any further than this is indicated by the name baptisms. This word is used as a title of certain Mosaic rites, in a manner which clearly shows that it was a common and well understood name of those rites.

The Mosaic rites, as enumerated and described in the books of Moses, consist of circumcision, sacrifi-

ces, abstinence from certain meats and drinks, as ceremonially unclean, and purifications.

In Hebrews 9: 9, 10, these are referred to under the titles of sacrifices, abstinence from meats and drinks, and baptisms. Which class of the Mosaic rites were baptisms? Which would this word most naturally denote? Evidently purifications. Can it possibly be applied to any other? By no means. Sacrifices were not baptisms.. Circumcision was not a baptism. The Mosaic baptisms then, must have been the Mosaic purifications.

We are shut up to the necessity, therefore, of interpreting baptisms in Heb. 9: 10, as a title of the Mosaic purifications; and divers or various baptisms must be considered as descriptive of the various and diversified purifications enjoined by Moses.

Second argument from the New Testament.

§6. That the word baptism was applied by the Jews to denote purifications, is also evident from John 3: 25, 26. "Then arose a disputation of the disciples of John, with a Jew, concerning purification; and they came to John and said to him, Rabbi, he that was with thee beyond the Jordan, to whom thou bearest witness, behold the same baptizeth, and all come to him."

The word translated purification in the above, is the same that is used in 2 Pet. 1: 9, which properly translated, reads as follows: "But he who is destitute of these [virtues] is blind, having a forgetfulness of his *purification* from his former sins."

The disputation of John's disciples with a Jew, related to purification. They refer this matter to

John, by stating that Jesus Christ had instituted and was administering, what appeared to them, a rival baptism to his. The matter in dispute, therefore, was the baptism of Christ, or christian baptism. The dispute concerning purification, was a dispute concerning christian baptism, or, perhaps, concerning the relation of Christ's baptism to that of John, and the comparative dignity and authority of the two institutions.

If Christ's baptism was a purification, then the divinely appointed purifications of the Jews were doubtless baptisms.

Conclusion.

§ 7. The argument contained in paragraphs 3, 4, 5 and 6, does not lead to a mere probability, or conjectural conclusion. It places the matter in question, beyond reasonable doubt. It proves that the Mosaic purifications were baptisms, and that they were so understood and so denominated by the Jews, both before the time of Christ, and during the period of his public ministry. The conclusion is not forced, nor far fetched. It is easy and natural. It is inevitable. We cannot, legitimately, get away from it if we would. We cannot infer the contrary. We cannot conclude that the evidence is indecisive, and that it leaves the matter only probable, and in a greater or less degree uncertain. This is not the fact. It does not leave the matter, in any degree, uncertain. The only way to avoid coming to the conclusion is, not duly to consider and estimate the evidence adduced in the case.

Men may conclude against any degree of evidence

when they have refused to admit and consider it. But evidence admitted and considered, produces its effect with certainty and uniformity. Hence, truth has this peculiarity, that it bears consideration, and becomes clearer the more accurately and thoroughly it is investigated and considered. Much that does not appear to superficial inquirers, or that shines out obscurely and imperfectly to their view, developes itself to the patient, studious and considerate, with a force of evidence that is irresistible.

First and superficial impressions are often false. They ought never to be trusted. Those views which bear the ordeal of impartial and extended investigations, and those alone, are entitled to our confidence. They are entitled to it equally, whether they occur readily or tardily; whether they are our first views, and those most naturally suggested by a superficial consideration of the subjects to which they relate, or whether they are the opposite of what merely superficial consideration would suggest.

SPECIFICATION OF THE PRINCIPAL MOSAIC BAPTISMS.

§8. 1. Baptism of sacred objects.

2. Baptism of the Levites.

3. Baptism of the Priests.

4. Baptism of persons and things, on account of ceremonial defilement from touching the dead.

5. Baptism of recovered lepers.

6. Baptism of the entire nation of the Israelites, previous to the giving of the law.

1. *Baptism of sacred objects.*

§ 9. Lev. 16: 14, 19. "And he shall take of the blood of the bullock and sprinkle it with his finger upon the mercy seat eastward, and before the mercy seat shall he sprinkle of the blood with his finger seven times. Then shall he kill the goat of the sin offering that is for the people, and bring his blood within the vail, and do with that blood as he did with the blood of the bullock, and sprinkle it upon the mercy seat and before the mercy seat. And he shall make an atonement for the holy place, because of the uncleanness of the children of Israel and because of their transgressions in all their sins. And so shall he do for the tabernacle of the congregation, that remaineth among them in the midst of their uncleanness. And he shall go out to the altar that is before the Lord and make an atonement for it, and shall take of the blood of the bullock and the blood of the goat and put it on the horns of the altar round about, he shall sprinkle of the blood upon it with his finger seven times, and cleanse it and hallow it from the uncleanness of the children of Israel."

This passage records the purification of the mercy seat and the altar. It was performed, not with water, but with the blood of victims offered in sacrifice, and was repeated annually on one of the great annual festivals of the Israelites.

The object of these rites was the removal of ceremonial uncleanness. The effect of them was, to cleanse and hallow the objects to which they were applied. They therefore agreed with the other purifications in design and signification, and were purifications.

They were administered by sprinkling blood seven

times successively with the finger on the object to be purified.

The Mosaic purifications having been proved to have been baptisms, these were baptisms. The significancy of these baptisms depended on the typical character of the victims whose blood was used. These victims were types of Christ, and their blood types of his blood. They were offered to God in sacrifice as types of Christ, suffering a violent death to make atonement for the sins of the world. Hence the application of their blood represented the application of the blood of Christ for the removal of human guilt. The application of that blood to things, as well as to persons, represented the participation of things in the effects and consequences of human guilt, and their exemption from the same through the atonement. It was, therefore, a symbol of legal justification.

2. *Baptism of the Levites.*

§10. Num. 8: 6, 7. "Take the Levites from among the children of Israel and cleanse them. And thus shalt thou do to them to cleanse them: Sprinkle water of purification upon them, and let them shave all their flesh, and let them wash their clothes, and so make themselves clean."

This purification was a ceremonial cleansing of persons in order to qualify them for religious services. It was performed by sprinkling with prepared or lustral water, and was accompanied with other symbolical ceremonies. Its significancy depended upon the mixture of the ashes of a victim offered in sacrifice to God in the water made use of. This victim was

a type of Christ suffering for the sins of men. The application of water prepared with its ashes represented the application of the atonement made by Christ to the subject of this rite. It was, therefore, a symbol of legal justification.

3. *Baptism of the Priests.*

§ 11. Ex. 29: 3, 21. "And Aaron and his sons thou shalt bring to the door of the tabernacle of the congregation, and thou shalt wash them with water. And thou shalt take of the blood that is upon the altar, and of the anointing oil, and sprinkle [them] upon Aaron and upon his garments, and upon his sons, and upon the garments of his sons with him; and he shall be hallowed, and his garments, and his sons and his sons' garments with him."

The effect of the washing and sprinkling was, that Aaron and his sons and their garments, were cleansed. This cleansing was of course ceremonial, and the demand for it did not depend on any want of physical cleanliness on the part of the subjects on whom it was performed.

The washing was such as could be performed at the tabernacle door. Whether it embraced any thing more than the customary washing of the hands, face and feet, we are not informed. It is not said that the under garments of the persons receiving this baptism were changed. The sacred vestments, consisting of the coat, the robe of the ephod, the ephod, and the breast plate, were put on for the first time after the baptismal or ceremonial washing, and before the sprinkling with blood from the altar.

The purification, however, depended essentially upon the sprinkling; and this had respect to the sacred vestments of the priests, as well as to their persons.

It does not appear that this purification involved any immersion; and in the absence of any thing indicating an immersion, an ordinary washing is all that can be legitimately inferred.

4. *Baptism of persons and things, on account of ceremonial defilement from touching the dead.*

§ 12. Num. 19: 17, 20. "For an unclean person, they shall take of the ashes of the burnt heifer of purification for sin, and running water shall be put thereto in a vessel. And a clean person shall take hysop, and dip it in the water, and sprinkle it upon the tent, and upon all the vessels, and upon the persons that were there, and upon him that touched a bone, or one slain, or one dead, or a grave. And the clean person shall sprinkle upon the unclean, on the third day and on the seventh day; and on the seventh day he shall purify himself, and wash his clothes, and bathe himself with water, and shall be clean at evening."

This purification depended upon a law declaring that both persons and things became ceremonially unclean by coming in contact with a dead body; and in some cases by proximity without contact. The defilement continued seven days; when, by Divinely appointed rites, it was removed. If not removed by such rites, it continued indefinitely.

The purification was effected by sprinkling with lustral water on the third day, and again on the

seventh day. After this, in the case of persons, the subject was required to wash himself and his clothes in water, whereupon he became clean at evening.

This purification is referred to directly as a baptism in the Apocrypha, in Ecclesiasticus 34: 25. That reference has been considered in §3. It is, however, but one of the various Mosaic baptisms mentioned in Heb. 9: 10; and the other purifications, established on similar principles, and administered in similar modes, must be concluded to constitute the others. If this purification was one baptism, the other analogous purifications were the other baptisms.

The defilement from which this baptism was a cleansing, was of a legal and symbolical nature. It was created by law, and was designed to represent sin. Every dead body was a symbol of sin; and touching it, or coming into proximity to it, represented becoming defiled with sin as with a contagion. The rite by which this symbolical contagion was removed, was a baptism or purification, and was performed mainly by sprinkling the person or thing with lustral water duly prepared for the purpose. In the case of persons, washing by the individual was added as the conclusion of the whole ceremony. The mode of this washing is not explicitly defined. Perhaps it was not important.

The washing is, in this case, as in that of the other Mosaic baptisms, enjoined by a Hebrew word which corresponds well, in signification, to the English word wash. It is applied to washing the face, as in the case of Joseph, Gen. 43: 31; to washing the hands, as in Ps. 26: 6; and to that of other parts of the body.

This word, therefore, does not require immersion; neither does it prescribe the mode or extent of the washing. All that it requires is a washing of the individual himself, to be performed by himself. The word bathe, made use of to express this washing, in our common English version, is to be understood in the same sense as when we speak of bathing the head with vinegar, not in the sense of going into deep water. In this sense, bathing is synonymous with affusion; in the other and more common sense, it does not answer to the original, of which it is designed to be a translation. The water made use of in this baptism was running water.

It appears from the above that the purification from defilement, contracted by touching the dead, was a highly significant and impressive ordinance, and well adapted to make a strong and solemn impression on a reflective mind. It was not a merely arbitrary appointment, adopted to accomplish no perceptible good, but a symbolical rite, representing, in the most impressive manner, the defiling and contagious nature of sin, and the removal of that defilement and contagion. It made a strong appeal to the faith of the ancient saints, and tended to confirm and increase the same.

Lustral Water.

Lustral water was a mixture prepared to be used in ceremonial cleansing or purification. It consisted of water taken from a stream, impregnated with the ashes of a heifer killed and burnt under the direction of the priest, with appropriate attending ceremonies. The slaughter and burning of the red heifer was a kind of sacrifice of that animal for the purpose of

obtaining her ashes for the uses here referred to.

The ashes were considered as possessing the essential virtues of a sacrificial death. They had the power of expiating and removing defilements considered as symbols of sin. In the purifications, therefore, in which this water was used, there was an allusion, not only to the nature of water as an instrument of purification, but to Christ, as denoted symbolically by a sacrificial victim, whose ashes were made use of in the preparation of the lustral water.

The scriptural account of the preparation of lustral water is contained in Num. 19: 1–10.

5. *Baptism of recovered Lepers.*

§ 13. Lev. 14: 7, 9. "And he (the priest) shall sprinkle upon him that is to be cleansed from the leprosy, seven times, and shall pronounce him clean. And he that is to be cleansed shall wash his clothes and shave off all his hair, and wash himself in water that he may be clean. After that shall he come into the camp, and shall tarry abroad out of his tent seven days. But it shall be on the seventh day that he shall shave off all his hair from his head, and his beard, and his eyebrows, even all his hair he shall shave off; and he shall wash his clothes; also, he shall wash his flesh in water and he shall be clean."

The word flesh seems to be here used in the sense of body. It was not said in the law respecting being baptized from the dead, that the subject should wash his body, but simply that he should wash; and the word "himself" is supplied in the translation to distinguish this washing more clearly from that of his clothes, mentioned in the context. But in the

case of the recovered leper, the subject's body is to be washed at the conclusion of the ceremony.

In this case as in the former, however, sprinkling seven times with lustral water on two different occasions, is an essential part of the ceremony. This was done once on the first day, and the second time on the seventh day. On the seventh day the cleansing of the subject was completed.

The cleansing of the recovered leper was not of a remedial nature. It was not designed to effect his recovery, and had no adaptation to such a purpose. It was designed only to remove the ceremonial defilement contracted by his having been a leper.

The leprosy was an extremely filthy and malignant disease; and persons seldom recovered from it. In this religious purification, it was made a symbol of sin. It was one of the most expressive symbols of sin that has ever yet been presented to the human mind. The defilement contracted by having the leprosy, was a symbol of the defilement or guilt contracted by being sinners; and the purification from this defilement a symbol of the expiation and removal of guilt. The mode as well as the design of this purification, bear a striking analogy to those of the purification from defilement contracted by touching the dead. If one was a baptism, the other must also have been a baptism; for they are both substantially the same thing. It is a remarkable peculiarity of the baptism of recovered lepers as well as of that from the dead, that the water made use of was running water, and that the ceremony was necessarily performed by streams where such water could be obtained. Lev. 14: 5, 6.

6. *The baptism of the entire nation of the Israelites previous to the giving of the Law.*

§ 14. Ex. 9: 10, 14. "And the Lord said to Moses, go to the people and sanctify them to-day and to-morrow, and let them wash their clothes."—"And Moses went down from the mount to the people, and sanctified the people, and they washed their clothes."

The purification is here expressed by the word sanctify. The sanctification of the people was a ceremonial one. It could not have been any other. A ceremonial sanctification is but another name for a ceremonial purification. But if it was a purification, it was a baptism. Because the Mosaic purifications have been proved to have been baptisms. Besides it agreed with the other Mosaic baptisms in representing the removal of guilt under the title of defilement.

The mode of its performance is not described; and as it was not designed to be repeated, a knowledge of it was not particularly important for the successors of those who were the subjects of it, neither is it necessary for us.

The general nature and design of the Mosaic Baptisms.

§ 15. From the foregoing investigations, the nature of the Mosaic baptisms is easily inferred. They were all ceremonial purifications, in which physical defilement is made a symbol of moral and legal defilement; and the removal of real or supposed physi-

cal defilement a symbol of the removal of moral defilement and legal disabilities.

Mankind are, by nature, sinners; and, as such, both defiled and condemned.

The Mosaic baptisms represented, by striking and impressive imagery, the removal both of this defilement and condemnation. In the cases of the defilement from the dead, and from leprosy, the symbols made use of are the most solemn and affecting that can well be conceived. Sin is viewed as a death, and a leprosy, a contagious death and a contagious leprosy. The person affected with this contagion is excluded from all communion with God, and with his people, until it is removed. Its entire removal occupies a period of seven days, requiring two seven fold baptisms, by sprinkling, together with appropriate sacrifices, and is concluded with a washing of himself by the subject. In the case of the baptism from leprosy, the sprinkling was with the blood of a victim offered in sacrifice; and in that of the baptism from the dead, with lustral water. The sprinklings were performed in the case of the baptism from leprosy by the priest; in that of the baptism from the dead, by any person not the subject of ceremonial defilement. This arrangement, by which any clean person was authorized to baptize from the dead, was necessary, on account of the frequency of those baptisms. To have devolved this duty upon the priests exclusively, would have laid a burden both upon them and upon the people, which neither could have borne.

It appears, on the whole, that the Mosaic purifications were not that unmeaning and insignificant system of arbitrary exactions which many have supposed them to be. They were religious rites of great

solemnity. They were parts of a system of spiritual worship, and were themselves as spiritual as any external rights can possibly be. Christian baptism and the Lord's Supper are not superior to them in this respect. These Christian ordinances are no more spiritual than the Mosaic purifications were.

CHAPTER II.

JEWISH TRADITIONARY BAPTISMS.

Specification of the principal traditionary Baptisms of the Jews.

§ 16. The Jewish traditionary baptisms were of two kinds.

1. Baptism of Proselytes or Proselyte Baptism.
2. Domestic Baptisms.

Proselyte baptism was administered to converts from the heathen, on their admission to the Jewish church; in the case of male subjects, after their circumcision, and in the case of female subjects without any previous initiatory rite. It was administered also to the children of proselytes equally with circumcision, and extended to those of both sexes.

The domestic baptisms of the Jews comprehend those which were performed statedly before meals, together with the baptism of things from the market, and the occasional baptism of articles of furniture, &c.

PROSELYTE BAPTISM.

Origin of Proselyte Baptism.

§ 17. The origin of Proselyte baptism is involved in obscurity. Some have supposed that it did not prevail till after the Christian era had commenced. The more general and more probable opinion however, is, that this institution had its origin soon after the return of the Jews from the Babylonian captivity. The arguments in favor of this opinion are the following:

1. This custom was universal among the Jews a few centuries after the commencement of the Christian era, accompanied with a tradition of its having been handed down from the time immediately after the return of the Jews from the Babylonian captivity. If introduced after the institution of Christian baptism, it must have been in imitation of that ordinance, or at least with a knowledge, on the part of the Jews, of the existence of that ordinance in the Christian church. Either of these suppositions is highly improbable. It cannot be supposed that the Jews would borrow this ordinance from the Christian church; for that church was the object of their continual and violent hatred and opposition. It cannot, for the same reason, be reasonably supposed that they would adopt it from any quarter, while they knew of its previous adoption and use in the Christian church. Their hatred to the Christian church would naturally prevent their making any changes in their established rites, by which they would seem to conform to Christian usages. It would, therefore, have prevented a change of this kind. The sup-

position, therefore, that Proselyte baptism was adopted by the Jews after the establishment of Christianity, is both unsustained by evidence, and is highly improbable.

2. If Proselyte baptism was introduced among the Jews since the commencement of the Christian era, there would be likely to be some traces of its origin in modern Jewish history and literature; but there is none. This circumstance increases the legitimate presumption, that the origin of the Proselyte baptism was previous to the Christian era.

3. Epictetus, born 90, A. D., whose sayings were collected and published by his pupil Arrian, denominates proselytes to the Jewish faith and worship, baptized persons. Arrian Diss. Epict. 2, 9. This denomination clearly implies that baptism was to proselytes a visible sign of membership in the Jewish church, and that being baptized was equivalent to being made proselytes. It may refer to proselytes as the subjects of the numerous Mosaic, and of the other traditionary baptisms of the Jews; but it seems most naturally to be accounted for on the supposition of the practice of Proselyte baptism at that time. On this supposition, *the baptized*, in reference to proselytes, would be a designation perfectly analogous to *the circumcised*, so often used in the scriptures to designate the Israelites.

4. In the Ethiopic version of the scriptures, supposed to have been made as early as the third or fourth century of the Christian era, the phrase, *to make one proselyte*, Matt. 23: 15, is translated *to baptize one stranger*. Therefore, in the opinion of the translator, for the Jews to make one proselyte was the same thing as to baptize one stranger or Gentile. This clearly shows that proselytes were made

by baptism, and consequently, that Proselyte baptism was in use at that period.

5. The introduction of John's and Christ's baptisms, with so little explanation in the New Testament, as initiatory rites into the respective societies established by John and Christ, is decidedly in favor of the opinion, that Proselyte baptism had been previously instituted. On the supposition that Proselyte baptism had been instituted and handed down from the times of the later prophets, the uses of John's and Christ's baptisms as initiatory rites into new religious communities, would require no explanation. They would be in conformity with an established and well known usage. On the contrary hypothesis, this application of baptism must have been a novelty to the Jews, and would evidently require explanation in a narrative like the gospels, addressed primarily to persons only acquainted with Jewish principles and usages. But no explanation is given. The whole subject is referred to and disposed of by the Evangelists as if it needed no explanation, but would be understood of course.

This circumstance is strongly in favor of the opinion that Proselyte baptism had been previously established, perhaps with the sanction of the later prophets; and that the baptisms of John and Christ were but modifications of the same.

The disciples of John were proselytes to John's faith and practice. The disciples of Christ were proselytes to the faith and practice inculcated by Christ. To those already acquainted with Proselyte baptism, the baptisms of proselytes to John and Christ would be easily understood, and would excite little surprise.

The little explanation, therefore, which was judged necessary on these subjects by the Evangelists, is an evidence of the previous institution and prevalence of Proselyte baptism among the Jews.

Objection.

It has sometimes been objected to the opinion in favor of the early origin of Proselyte baptism, that this rite is not mentioned by Josephus, when he speaks of the circumcision of the Idumeans in the time of Hyrcanus.

His language is, that the Idumeans were allowed their choice, either to leave their country or to be circumcised and conform to the laws of the Jews. The omission of baptism in this expression does not imply that it was not required. Circumcision was the leading initiatory rite. It was the first rite performed on the candidate, and was the rite to which foreigners would be most likely to object. In proposing to the Idumeans, therefore, to be circumcised, and to conform to the laws of the Jews, Hyrcanus proposes to them to submit to all the established rites of Judaism. Baptism was comprehended in the general requirement to conform to the laws of the Jews.

It was not necessary that it should be explicitly mentioned in the proposal of Hyrcanus, or in the narrative of Josephus, in order to its being understood, on the supposition of its general prevalence at that time. The neglect of Josephus, therefore, to mention baptism in connection with circumcision, in the account which he gives of the proposal to the Idumeans to become proselytes to Judaism, and of

their accession to the same, proves nothing against the prevalence of Proselyte baptism at that time.

The foregoing argument in favor of the early origin of Proselyte baptism, is strengthened by the consideration that Proselyte baptism was a kindred institution to the other Jewish baptisms, and seems naturally to have grown out of them. In the estimate of the Jewish law, the entire heathen world was in a state of ceremonial defilement. The Jews, when defiled, were purified by baptisms. What could be more natural than to resort to the same means for the cleansing of the defiled Gentiles?

The principle of the Jewish defilements and purifications, applied to proselytes, seems to require that they should be baptized previous to participating in the fellowship of the baptized Jews. Their circumcision removed a local defilement—their baptism removed a general defilement. If Proselyte baptism grew legitimately out of the Mosaic baptisms, it was virtually a Divine institution, and of equal authority with the other baptisms out of which it grew. How the defiled heathen could be received to communion in the Jewish church, without baptism, consistently with the divinely established principles respecting ceremonial defilements and purifications, it is not easy to see.

Order of initiation into the Jewish Church.

The order of the initiation of proselytes was as follows:

The candidate was first instructed in the principles and usages of Judaism, and gave his assent to the same. Their male subjects were circumcised. After circumcision, they were baptized, and received

to full communion in the Jewish church. Females were received by baptism only. The children of proselytes were circumcised and baptized at the same times with their parents. This baptism was never repeated either in the case of children or adults.

Mode of Proselyte Baptism.

The primitive mode of Proselyte baptism is not known. That which has prevailed as far back as the history of this rite can be distinctly traced, is by immersion in the presence of three judges.

Design of Proselyte Baptism.

Proselyte baptism, like other Jewish purifications, was a symbolical rite, indicative of the removal of guilt, and of the cleansing of the soul from sin. The Jewish Rabbins have for ages attached to it a saving efficacy. They teach that the baptism of proselytes is the occasion of their receiving new souls, or experiencing a literal change of soul. This error is analogous to that of making Christian baptism the occasion of regeneration, of which it is only the symbol and seal.

Proselyte baptism is supposed to have been introduced for the following purposes:

1. To distinguish proselytes, by a religious initiatory rite, from circumcised Gentiles; such as the Ishmaelites.

2. To serve as an initiatory rite, to seal the introduction of females to the Jewish church.

As circumcision was applicable only to males, it must have seemed highly desirable to accord to woman some analogous seal, by which their interest

in the grace of God, and in the blessings of his covenant with men, should be distinctly marked.

Proselyte baptism answered this purpose.

3. To remove that general defilement which, according to the principles of the Mosaic laws respecting ceremonial defilement and cleansing, pertained to the whole heathen world.

DOMESTIC BAPTISMS.

§ 18. These are referred to in Mark 7: 3, 4. This passage has greatly perplexed commentators and translators. Properly translated, it reads as follows:

"For the Pharisees and all the Jews eat not, except they wash their hands with the fist closed. And [things] from the market they do not eat, unless they baptize [them]. And there are many other [customs] which they have received to hold, [as] baptisms of cups and pitchers and brazen vessels and couches."

The first difficulty in translating this passage is with the word translated *oft* in the common version, and *fist closed*, in the above. The signification oft or often, is derived from the vulgate, a latin translation, and the one commonly used by the Papal church. The Greek word, however, to which this corresponds, does not have this signification. Its usual and proper signification is that which I have given. There is no reason to depart from it, provi-did the context will bear this sense.

Washing the hands with the fist closed, would be very different from an ordinary and natural mode of washing them, and perhaps may have been adopted

for this reason. A religious washing ought to differ from an ordinary one, even if performed in the same general mode. Besides, this washing, like the other ceremonial washings, was not performed for purposes of cleanliness, but solely for the purpose of ceremonial purification. It may have been performed, either by dipping the fists in water or by having water poured on them.

The fourth verse admits of being construed in two different ways; in both of which, an ellipsis is to be supplied. Translating it without altering the arrangement or supplying the ellipsis, it reads thus: "And from the market, unless they baptize, they eat not." Some supply before from, returning, and take baptize in its middle or reflexive sense as terminating on the subject, so as to make it read thus: "And returning from the market, unless they baptize themselves, they do not eat."

Our objection to this rendering is, that it makes the whole expression superfluous and contradictory of the assertion contained in the verse before it.

The evangelist had said in the preceding verse, that the Jews washed their hands as a ceremonial purification before all meals. Such a washing was a baptism; for it was a religious purification of the same kind as purification from defilement contracted by touching the dead. The design of both was to denote spiritual cleansing. Both removed ceremonial defilement. Both were administered, fully or in part, by means of water, considered as a medium of physical cleansing.

Purification from defilement, contracted by touching the dead, was called, being baptized, in one of the aphocryphal books of the Septuagint, making that kind of religious rites baptisms. The religious

washing of the hands, according to the tradition of Elders, referred to Mark 7: 2, 3, and Matt. 15: 2, was a rite of that kind, therefore it was a baptism.

According to the interpretation now under consideration, the Evangelist tells us, in the first place, that the Jews practiced baptism before all their meals, and then in the next verse, that they did it before some of their meals, that is, after returning from the market.

Not only is the second declaration superfluous, it is contradictory of the other. For it implies that baptism was not practiced generally before all meals, but only on occasions of returning from the market.

The version which I have adopted, supplies *things* and *them*, instead of *returning;* and takes the verb baptize in its active sense, a sense which is common to the middle form of Greek verbs, and which is always given them by intelligent translators, when the connection requires it.

Eating from the market, is a natural expression to denote eating things from the market.

A similar mode of expression is used in Mark 7: 28, which is rendered in the common bible; "eat of the children's crumbs."

1 Cor. 9: 13 and 14, contain similar ellipses, where it is said; "Do ye not know, that they who minister about holy things, live of the temple; (that is of the things obtained from the temple;) and they who wait on the altar, are partakers with the altar? Even so hath the Lord ordained, that they who preach the gospel, should live of the gospel; that is, of the proceeds of the gospel."

The version which I have adopted, is in perfect agreement with the orginal Greek which it repre-

sents, and suits perfectly the context and the nature of the subject treated of.

Food from the market is in every point of view as appropriate a subject of ceremonial defilement and cleansing, as dishes and couches; and those who baptize the latter, would be compelled, in order to be consistent with themselves, to baptize the former.

On the whole, therefore, I conclude, with Kuinoel and other distinguished interpreters, that the first part of Mark 7: 4, relates to the baptism of provisions obtained from the market, and not to the baptism of persons returning from it.

The latter part of Mark 7: 4, mentions explicitly the baptism of cups and pitchers, and brazen vessels, and couches. The original word in this passage, translated washing in the common bible, denotes baptisms, not secular washing, and ought to be translated accordingly.

In the entire passage, therefore, we have three different Jewish baptisms:

1. The baptism of persons before meals, performed by washing the hands with the fists closed.

2. The baptism of provisions obtained from the market, the mode of which is not described. This must have been, however, by sprinkling, as many kinds of provisions would not admit of being either washed or dipped.

3. The baptism of cups, pitchers, brazen vessels and couches.

The mode of baptism in respect to those articles of furniture, is not described. Sprinkling is the most probable, and is the only one that was practicable in respect to couches and articles of that kind.

CHAPTER III.

JOHN'S BAPTISM.

Nature of John's Baptism.

§ 19. The baptism of John began and ended with that reformer. That it was not the same as Christian baptism, is proved by Acts 19: 2–5, where disciples who had been baptized with John's baptism, afterwards received Christian baptism from the hands of the apostles. John's baptism, therefore, is an institution by itself, different from the Mosaic baptisms, different from the traditional baptisms practiced by the Jews of his time, and different from Christian baptism.

Considered as a baptism, it was analagous to the other baptisms which have been described. It was, like them, a ceremonial purification, and symbol of moral cleansing. It differed from them, however, in being a rite of initiation into the society of John's professed disciples. Hence the expression, John 4: 1. "The Pharisees had heard that Jesus made and baptized more disciples than John."

The making and baptizing of disciples by Jesus and John are here contrasted. Jesus made disciples by converting them to his doctrines, and then he admitted them to the society of his professed followers, by causing them to receive baptism. John made disciples by converting them to his doctrines, and then admitted them to the society of his professed followers, by a similar rite.

As Christian baptism was a rite of initiation into the Christian church, John's baptism was a rite of initiation into John's church, or John's religious society.

John did not found the Christian church, and did not, by his baptism, admit persons into it. He did, however, found a religious society within the bosom of the corrupt Jewish church and admitted persons to it by baptism. John's baptism, therefore, differs from all other baptisms in being a rite of initiation into the religious order or society of which he was the founder.

This society was not destined to be permanent. It was soon merged in the Christian church, and its initiatory rite discontinued. But for a time it exerted an important influence in favor of piety and good morals, and contributed greatly to prepare the way for the successful establishment of Christianity. Every true disciple of John, was prepared to become an immediate disciple of Christ, as soon as an opportunity should offer.

In being made a rite of initiation into the society of John's disciples, his baptism became of a sacramental character. As a seal of discipleship to John, it sealed the obligations of the subjects to perform all the duties of disciples. It also sealed their faith in the doctrines which John taught and inculcated. Hence it is called "the baptism of repentance for the remission of sins," Mark 1 : 4; and hence the expression, "I baptize you with water to repentance," Matt. 3 : 11.

The baptism of repentance for the remission of sins, involves the recognition of the doctrine, that repentance is necessary in order to our obtaining the remission of sins. It also implies, that the baptism

so denominated, is a seal of our faith in this doctrine. Baptizing persons to repentance, involves a recognition of the obligation to repent, and an engagement on the part of the subjects to discharge this obligation. To baptize one to repentance, is to take his confessed obligation to repent, and seal it with the ordinance of baptism. In the case of adult persons, it implies still more. It implies a profession of actual repentance on the part of the subjects, and is the seal of that profession.

Subjects of John's Baptism.

§20. The subjects of John's baptism are described in the following general terms; Matt. 3: 5, 5, "Then went out to him, Jerusalem and all Judea and all the region round about Jordan, and were baptized at Jordan by him, confessing their sins."

These general terms require some limitation. The natural limitations are made in the following paraphrase: The Jews in Jerusalem and throughout all Judea and in all the region about Jordan, generally believed in John, became his disciples, adopted his principles, and were admitted to the society of his professed followers, by baptism. This embraces men and women, though neither are distinctly specified in the above description. Whether it embraced the children of adult converts or not, is a question of some considerable interest, and one in repect to which, different opinions are entertained.

Children are no where in the New Testament explicitly stated to have been included among the subjects of John's baptism, nor are they any where explicitly stated to have been excluded from this

rite. The subject is only adverted to, in the most general terms, in the inspired narrative. The only specifications are of Pharisees and Sadducees, Matt. 3: 7, Jesus, 3: 13–15, the multitude, Luke 3: 7, the people, 3: 10, the publicans, 3: 12, and the soldiers, 3: 14.

Some deny that the children of adult disciples were included among the subjects of John's baptism, on the following grounds:

1. That they are not distinctly specified as having been the subjects of his baptism, in the inspired narrative.

2. That they could not exercise the repentance, and faith which he enjoined.

Both these premises are true. But the conclusion does not legitimately follow.

John was a divinely appointed herald, calling upon all the true servants of God to separate themselves from the rest of the nation, by joining his religious association. His organization proceeded on the principle, that the nation, as such, was fundamentally corrupt, and liable to be cast off from the favor of God for its corruption.

He raises the standard of true piety and calls upon all to crowd around it, and form a true church in the midst of one that had become partially corrupt. He does not teach a religion, fundamentally new. He is only an expounder of the old religion. He aims to bring the people back to the spirit and letter of their long established institutions. What Abraham and the Patriarchs were, in respect to a due observance of religious and moral duties, he aims to make them.

All who respond to his call and obey his injunctions, he seals by baptism, as belonging to the reform-

ed branch of the Jewish church. His society was not a new church organized on new principles. It was only a reformed branch of the Jewish church.

Now, in the absence of any explicit and scriptural statements on this subject, what is the fair presumption in respect to children? According to the principles of the Jewish economy, what were the rights and privileges of children? Evidently, the fair presumption is, that children, included with their parents as the subjects of religious purification generally, were also included as subjects of this particular purification. Having been from the time of Abraham, the subjects of the initiatory rite and seal of faith and holiness, they must be entitled to share, with their parents, this additional seal, unless the contrary is explicitly asserted. The contrary is not asserted, neither is it implied by any thing that appears in the inspired narrative. It follows, therefore, that children must have been included with their converted parents as subjects of John's baptism, on the same principle, in accordance with which, they were made the subjects of circumcision, and of the other Jewish baptisms.

Mode of John's Baptism.

§ 21. The mode of John's baptism is no where in the scriptures particularly described. The word baptism does not restrict this rite to any particular mode, because this word denoted the Mosaic purifications, which were administered in different modes, but chiefly by sprinkling and affusion, or washing. No other terms are applied to describe John's baptism, which designate the mode of its per-

formance. The common English Bible represents it as having been administered in the river Jordan. Matt. 3: 6, and Mark 1: 5. The preposition which, in these passages, is translated *in*, means either in or at. In many situations, it signifies *in*, in the sense of *within*, and usually has this signification before the names of cities, countries, edifices, &c. In many situations, also, it has the less definite and wider signification of *at*, *on*, *by*, *near*, &c., as in Luke 13: 4, where the tower in Siloam means the tower at or near the fountain of Siloam, not in it. The same preposition that expresses, in the above passages, the relation of John's baptism to the river Jordan, expresses, in Luke 13: 4, the relation of a tower to the fountain of Siloam. The tower, however, was not in the fountain but near it. The baptism of John may then not have been administered in the river Jordan but near it.

The passages, therefore, where in the common English Bible, John's baptism is said to have been administered in the river Jordan, are incorrectly translated, and afford no proof that his baptism was administered in the river; the same word, in the original, expressing both the relations of *in* and *at*, or *near*.

It is impossible to determine, from the word used to express the relation of the river to John's baptism, whether it was performed in the river or only by the river. This word, therefore, proves nothing in respect to the mode of his baptism.

The common English Bible informs us, Matt. 3: 16, that, "Jesus, when he was baptized, went up straightway out of the water."

The preposition here translated "out of," usually means from or away from, and is correctly translated

as expressing that relation, Matt. 3: 7, in the sentence, "Who hath warned you to flee *from* the wrath to come?" The question is not "Who hath warned you to flee out of the wrath to come," but "Who hath warned you to flee from, or away from, the wrath to come." So in numerous other passages.

This passage merely teaches that Jesus, after his baptism, went up from the water, not that he went up out of it. It therefore proves nothing in respect to the mode of John's baptism, except that in the case of Jesus it was administered at the river Jordan; and, by implication, that it was administered with river water.

It does not appear, however, that all John's baptisms were administered even at the river Jordan; for we are told, John 3: 23, that, at a certain time, "John was baptizing in Enon, near to Salem, because there were many waters there." The expression "many waters," is the literal rendering of the original. It means many streams or fountains.

The reason assigned for John's baptizing in Enon, does not indicate any particular mode of baptism. It cannot reasonably be supposed that many streams were more necessary for one mode of baptism than for another. One stream was sufficient for any mode of performing this rite. The immense crowds, however, who attended on the preaching of John, coming in great numbers from the distance of fifty or eighty miles, and the same individuals naturally remaining for a considerable time, required large accommodations. A main article in respect to their supply, was water for themselves and for their animals. This, in large abundance was indispensably necessary; and to meet this exigency, we have reason to believe Enon was chosen, for a time, as the place of John's

labors. Its many streams made it a suitable place, in consequence, not of any particular mode of baptism which John practiced, but in consequence of its better adaptation to accommodate properly the vast multitudes who attended on his ministry.

John, during the short period of his public ministry, baptized, according to the Evangelists, almost the entire Jewish nation, which consisted of several millions. Matt. 3: 5; Mark 1: 5. He did this with his own hands, not by the ministry of his disciples; for it does not appear that his disciples baptized at all.

This fact indicates a mode of baptism that could be administered without great fatigue, or exposure of health to injury from long standing in the water. It is not the plan of Divine Providence to perform miracles for the preservation of men; the object of miracles is to serve as grounds of faith. We have no intimation that John was preserved from injury, and sustained, under the fatigue of a laborious mode of administering baptism, by a continual miracle. Therefore, we are not authorized to believe that he had any miraculous support in this part of his ministry. We are, on the other hand, expressly informed that John wrought no miracles. John 10: 41.

Whatever, therefore, was the mode of his baptism, it does not seem possible that it could have been immersion. No human constitution could have endured the labor and exposure of immersing the millions that appear to have been baptized by him, during the short period of his public ministry.

Authority of John's Baptism.

§ 22. John's baptism was of divine authority. In this respect, it stands on a level with the Mosaic bap-

tisms, and far above the traditionary baptisms of the Jews. His baptism received the approbation of the Saviour, and of the Evangelists. This could not have been the case unless it had been of divine authority. In being of divine authority, it was conformable to a divine law requiring it. That law, however, is not recorded in the scriptures. Its existence is a matter of inference; but though its existence is a matter of inference, it is not a matter of doubt, or of uncertainty. Nothing can be more certain.

John himself refers to the divine authority of his baptism, in the expression recorded, John 1: 33, "He that sent me to baptize with water, the same said to me, upon whom thou shalt see the Spirit descending and remaining on him, this is he, who baptizeth with the Holy Ghost."

We infer from this passage, that God sent John to baptize; consequently, that his baptism was of divine authority, an inference in agreement with that before made from other premises.

CHAPTER IV.

CHRISTIAN BAPTISM.

Historical account of the Origin of Christian Baptism.

§ 23. Christian baptism is the baptism instituted by Christ and administered to his disciples. The

scriptures contain no record of its primitive institution, or of the explanations and instructions of the Saviour respecting it, either at the time of its institution, or on any subsequent occasion.

The earliest notices that we have of it, are in the Gospel of John, 3: 22, 26, and 4: 1, 2. "After these things came Jesus, and his disciples, into the land of Judea, and there he abode with them and baptized. And they (John's disciples,) came to John and said, Rabbi, he that was with thee beyond Jordan, to whom thou barest witness, behold the same baptizeth, and all come to him." "When, therefore, the Lord knew that Jesus made and baptized more disciples than John, (though Jesus himself baptized not, but his disciples,) he left Judea and departed again to Gallilee."

These are all the scriptural instructions we have on Christian baptism, till after the resurrection of the Saviour. They are all confined to the Gospel of John. Matthew and Mark take no notice of Christian baptism till they received the commission to preach the gospel to every creature, after the resurrection. They then notice it only as making a part of that commission, without any explanation, further than that persons are to be baptized to the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost. Luke takes no notice of it at all.

The passages referred to in John, show clearly that Christian baptism was instituted by Christ at the commencement of his ministry, not after its close, as is erroneously supposed by many.

After the crucifixion, Christian baptism is mentioned by Mark and Luke, in the following passages: Mark 16: 16. "And he said to them, go ye into all the world and preach the gospel to every creature.

He that believeth, and is baptized, shall be saved; but he that believeth not, shall be damned."

Matt. 28: 19, 20. "Go ye, therefore, and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them to the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost; teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you; and lo I am with you always, to the end of the world."

These two passages contain similar injunctions respecting preaching the gospel, and administering Christian baptism to all men. That recorded in Mark is supposed to have been delivered on the evening of the day of the resurrection. John 20: 19–23, and Luke 24: 36–47, relate to the same occasion.

That recorded in Matthew was addressed to the disciples, by the Saviour, on the occasion of his appearing to them, agreeably to previous appointment, on a mountain in Gallilee. This appearance occurred on the third Sabbath after the resurrection, and is recorded only by Matthew.

The next notice of Christian baptism is in Acts 2: 38, 39, 41. "Then Peter said to them, repent and be baptized, every one of you, for the remission of sins, and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost. For the promise is to you and to your children, and to all that are afar off; even as many as the Lord our God shall call. Then they that gladly received his word were baptized; and the same day there were added to them about three thousand souls."

In the subsequent parts of the New Testament history, and in the Epistles, Christian baptism is frequently mentioned and alluded to, but in no case particularly described.

It appears, therefore, that the scriptures contain no account of the institution of Christian baptism. The first notice which we have of it relates to it as already instituted, and as being administered by the disciples of Christ to large numbers of converts. We are expressly informed that Christ did not administer his baptism, but referred the administration of it entirely to his disciples. John 4: 2. Where it is said, expressly, that he baptized, in John 3: 22, it must be interpreted on the principle that, what one does by another he does by himself. He baptized by employing his disciples to do it for him.

Nature and design of Christian Baptism.

§ 24. The nature and design of Christian baptism are not particularly explained, either in connection with the first notices of it, or subsequently. They must, therefore, be ascertained by indirect evidence.

Had it differed essentially from the other customary baptisms of the Jews, some explanation would have been necessary. The fact, therefore, that no such explanations are given, proves that it does not differ essentially from them.

The older Jewish baptisms were ceremonial purifications, representing, symbolically, that spiritual cleansing which fits us for the enjoyment of God. The same appears to have been the case with John's baptism. It was a ceremonial cleansing or rite of purification, representing holiness as necessary to salvation.

The allusions to baptism, and the figurative uses made of it in the New Testament, fully sustain this

view. Hence the expression, to baptize with the Holy Ghost. Matt. 3: 11; Mark 1: 8; Luke 3: 16, 17; John 1: 33. In these passages, John contrasts his baptizing with water, with Christ's baptizing with the Holy Spirit.

Christ makes the same contrast, Acts 1: 5. "For John truly baptized with water, but ye shall be baptized with the Holy Ghost, not many days hence." Peter alludes to this declaration on the occasion of his being called to account for preaching the gospel to Cornelius and his friends. Acts 11: 15, 16; "And as I began to speak, the Holy Ghost fell on them, as on us at the beginning. Then I remembered the word of the Lord, how that he said, John indeed baptized with water, but ye shall be baptized with the Holy Ghost." The conclusion drawn from Peter's argument, of which the above is a part, was, that "God also, to the Gentiles, granted repentance to life." Acts 11: 18.

It appears that the declaration of Christ, "ye shall be baptized with the Holy Ghost, not many days hence," was fulfilled on the day of Pentecost, when the Holy Spirit was largely poured out, and operated in the conversion of about three thousand persons. These persons were baptized with the Holy Ghost, by being converted and purified from sin.

In the conversion of Cornelius and his friends, Peter recognizes the administration of this same spiritual baptism to the Gentiles, which had before been performed upon the Jews.

In Acts 22: 16, Ananias says to Saul, "And now, why tarriest thou? Arise, be baptized, and wash away thy sins, calling on the name of the Lord." Here baptism is spoken of as a washing away of

sins, showing that, in the apprehension of Ananias, it was a symbol of moral cleansing.

Titus 3: 5, contains a similar allusion, where it is said of Christ, that "Not by works of righteousness which we have done, but according to his mercy, he saved us by the washing of regeneration and the renewing of the Holy Ghost."

Also, 1 Pet. 3: 21. "The antitype to which thing, baptism even now saves us, (not the putting away of the filth of the flesh, but the answer of a good conscience towards God,) by the resurrection of Christ."

Here baptism is referred to as a saving ordinance. But the baptism which has this efficacy is said not to be the putting away of the filth of the flesh, but that internal operation of the Spirit, which produces a good conscience. The answer of a good conscience is the declaration of Christian faith, which is returned from a sanctified mind. Hence external baptism is a sign of internal cleansing. This conclusion, which has already been deduced from other premises, may fairly be deduced from the above passage alone, and is a necessary inference from it.

John 3: 25, is in agreement with the doctrine that Christian baptism is an ordinance of ceremonial purification, where the question concerning purification appears to have been a question concerning the relative character of the baptisms of John and Christ. This clearly appears, from the verses which follow, and from the information given to John on the occasion, as involving the matter in dispute, that Christ was baptizing, and that all men were coming to him for baptism.

In addition to being a symbol of purification, baptism was a seal of discipleship to Christ. This is evident, from the following considerations:

1. It was administered to all disciples immediately on their becoming such, and was never repeated. The obligation to receive it was universal. Those who were made disciples during the personal ministry of Christ were baptized during his ministry; those who were made disciples on the day of Pentecost, were baptized on the day of Pentecost; and so of others.

2. The baptismal formula indicates that baptism is a seal of discipleship.

This is alluded to in the following passages:

Matt. 28: 19. "Baptizing them to the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost." Acts 8: 16; "For he (the Holy Ghost,) as yet was fallen upon none of them, only they were baptized to the name of the Lord Jesus." Acts 19: 5; "When they heard this, they were baptized to the name of the Lord Jesus." Rom. 6: 3, 4; "Know ye not, that as many of us as were baptized to Christ, were baptized to his death? Therefore, we are buried with him by baptism to his death." That is, by being baptized to his death. 1 Cor. 12: 13; "For by one spirit we are all baptized to one body, whether Jews or Gentiles; whether bond or free." Gal. 3: 27; "For as many of you as have been baptized to Christ, have put on Christ."

In the above passages, persons are spoken of as being baptized to the Father, and the Son, and the Holy Ghost; and in allusion to the fact that Christ was the discriminating object of faith; as being baptized to him, the other persons of the Trinity not being specified. They are also spoken of as being baptized to the death of Christ, and to one body or community.

The word which I have translated *to*, in all the above passages, and which, in the common bible, is, in some of them, translated *in*, and in some of them *into*, is susceptible of several different significations. It means to, into, in, for, &c., and is translated by these different words, and others, both in the New Testament and in other ancient writings. It is often used after verbs of motion, to express the direction of that motion; as in John 7: 8, where it occurs twice. "Go ye up *to* this feast. I go not up yet *to* this feast, for my time is not yet fully come." Matt. 5: 1; "He went up *to* a mountain." In the latter passage, the preposition is incorrectly translated *into* in the common bible.

Men often go to mountains, but they do not, in ordinary cases, go into them.

John 8: 1. "Jesus went *to* the Mount of Olives." John 12: 1; "Then Jesus, six days before the passover, came *to* Bethany." John 17: 1; "These words spake Jesus, and lifted up his eyes *to* heaven."

Before the names of persons, this preposition signifies to, towards, for.

In most of the passages which contain an allusion to the baptismal formula, this preposition is used before the names of persons; in one of them it is used before a word which, in that connection, denotes the Christian church. What is the relation, then, which it must denote in these connections? Evidently it denotes the relation of the person baptized to the person to whom he is baptized. If he is baptized to the Trinity, the preposition before Trinity denotes the relation of the baptized person to the Trinity. If he is baptized to the Lord Jesus, it denotes the relation of the baptized person to the Lord Jesus.

If he is baptized to one body, the church, it denotes his relation to the church.

What then is the relation of a baptized person to the Trinity?

Answer. It is the relation of a professed worshipper and disciple of the Trinity.

So the relation of a baptized person to the Lord Jesus, is that of a professed worshipper and disciple of the Lord Jesus, and his relation to the church is that of a church member.

It appears then, most clearly, that persons are baptized to Christ, as his worshippers and disciples. Baptism, therefore, is manifestly the seal of their discipleship, because it is a consecration of them to him as his worshippers and disciples, or a seal of such consecration.

Theory that Christian Baptism is a symbolical representation of the death, burial, and resurrection of Christ, considered and disproved.

§25. Some have adopted the theory that Christian baptism is a symbolical representation of the death, burial, and resurrection of Christ. This theory is supported by an appeal to Rom. 6: 3–5, and Col. 2: 11, 12. These passages, properly translated, read as follows:

"Know ye not that as many of us as have been baptized to Christ, have been baptized to his death. We are, therefore, buried with him by baptism to death, that, as Christ was raised from the dead by the glory of the Father, so we also should walk in newness of life. For if we have been planted together in the

likeness of his death, we shall be also [planted together in the likeness] of his resurrection."

"In whom, also, ye are circumcised, with a circumcision made without hands, by putting off the carnal body, by the circumcision of Christ, being buried with him by baptism; by which, also, ye are risen with him, through faith, in respect to the power of God, who raised him from the dead."

In the common bible, the preposition which shows the relation between baptized and Christ, and baptized and death, Rom. 6: 3, is translated *into* instead of *to*. This translation falls little short of being absurd. Even on the supposition that baptism was administered by immersion, what propriety would there be in calling such an immersion an immersion into Christ, or an immersion into his death? On that supposition, baptism was an immersion into water, but not into Christ or into his death.

But considering baptism, without respect to the mode of its administration, as sealing persons for Christ, and thus uniting them to him in church membership; and substituting to for into, we have a consistent sense. According to this hypothesis, being baptized to Christ means being made a professed disciple of Christ by baptism; and being baptized to the death of Christ, means being made a subject of the death of Christ, or being introduced by baptism to a state of death analogous to that which Christ suffered. Being baptized to the death of Christ, is a figurative expression, introduced as an inference from our baptism to Christ. Because Christ has died, and we are baptized to him after his death; therefore, baptism introduces us to a state of death. By death is here meant deadness to sin.

In the expressions baptized to Christ, and baptized to the death of Christ, therefore, we have no evidence of any representation of Christ's death in baptism; neither do these expressions indicate any particular mode of performing this rite to the exclusion of others. Their significancy depends not on the mode, but on the design of baptism, as a rite of initiation into the Christian church, and an ordinance by which persons are sealed and devoted to Christ.

Being buried with Christ, by baptism to death, or by being baptized to death, means being located with Christ; being introduced into the same state and condition with him, by being baptized to him, or devoted and sealed by baptism to him. Here, therefore, is no representation of burial by baptism.

It is inferred that if we are baptized or devoted by baptism to Christ, who has suffered death, then we must be dead also; that is, dead to sin. And it is still further inferred, that, as the dead are usually buried, and thus removed entirely from any participation in the affairs of this world, Christians, being dead as Christ was dead, must also be buried as he was buried. Thus, buried with Christ means buried as Christ was buried. This, however, is to be taken figuratively and spiritually. We are buried from a state of sin by being far removed from it. The Apostle extends this into an allegory through Rom. 6: 5, 6, &c.

In the whole, however, no allusion is made to what baptism represents, but to the relations which it establishes, and the condition into which it introduces us.

Being buried with Christ by baptism, and being risen with him by the same, (mentioned in Collosians,) are similar to the passage now explained.

The preposition which I have translated by, is, in the common bible, incorrectly translated in. Before nouns denoting place or capacity for containing any thing, it signifies in, at, or by, as in Luke 11: 1; "And it came to pass, that, as he was in a certain place praying;" "in a house," Matt. 8: 6; "in the temple," Acts 2: 46; "in the synagogues," Matt. 4: 23.

Before nouns denoting elevated objects, it signifies on or upon; as "on a tree," Mark 11: 13; "on a mountain," Luke 8: 32; John 4: 20; Heb. 8: 5.

Before nouns denoting means, instruments, and agents, it signifies by or with; as Matt. 3: 11; "I indeed baptize you *with* water to repentance; but he that cometh after me is mightier than I, whose shoes I am not worthy to bear; he shall baptize you *with* the Holy Ghost, and *with* fire." Matt. 9: 34. "But the Pharisees said, he casteth out demons *by* Beelzebub, the prince of demons." Matt. 12: 24, 26. Acts 7: 35; "This Moses, whom they refused, saying, who made thee a ruler and a judge? the same did God send to be a ruler and a deliverer, *by* the hand of the angel who appeared to him in the bush." Rom. 15: 16; "That the offering of the Gentiles might be acceptable, being sanctified *by* the Holy Ghost." Rom. 16: 16; "Salute one another *with* a holy kiss." Rev. 6: 8; "And power was given to him over a fourth part of the earth, to kill *with* the sword and *with* famine, and *with pestilence*." Rev. 5: 9; "And thou hast redeemed us to God *by* thy blood."

In the above cases, and in many others, the preposition which, in Col. 2: 12, expresses the relation of baptism to being buried with Christ, and to being risen with him, expresses the relation of the instru-

ment, means, or agent to the action performed. Here, also, it has a similar meaning. Baptism is the instrument or means of our burial and resurrection with Christ.

But in what sense does it bury and raise us up to life with Christ?

Answer. By representing us as dying to sin and becoming alive to righteousness; or, in other words, by representing us as cleansed from sin, and made spiritually alive with holiness.

This is the appropriate symbolical significancy of all baptisms; or baptism buries us with Christ, and raises us up to life with him, by sealing us his, and devoting us sacramentally to him.

It appears, therefore, from a careful examination of Rom. 6: 3–5, and Col. 2: 11, 12, that these passages do not assert nor imply any symbolical representation of the death and resurrection of Christ, by Christian baptism.

The administration of baptism in the modes appropriated to the Mosaic baptisms, that is, by sprinkling and affusion, does not bear the slightest analogy to the death, burial, or resurrection of Christ. The administration of the same by immersion might represent a death, burial, and resurrection, if it had been appointed for that purpose. But we are no where informed, in the scriptures, that such an appointment was made; neither is there any evidence whatever of such an appointment.

To suppose that there was such an appointment on account of allusions, which admit of a satisfactory explanation on other grounds, is evidently unauthorized. The allusions to baptism in Rom. 6: 3–5, and Col. 2: 11, 12, do admit of satisfactory explanations on other grounds. They, therefore, do not

prove an appointment of baptism to represent the death, burial, and resurrection of Christ. Consequently, there is no proof in favor of the hypothesis, that Christian baptism is a symbolical representation of the death, burial, and resurrection of Christ, in the bible. That hypothesis must fall. It is not a part of religious truth. It is not an appropriate object of religious faith. Faith requires evidence; to believe without evidence, or any further than evidence leads, is not to exercise legitimate faith but criminal credulity.

CHAPTER V.

MODE OF CHRISTIAN BAPTISM.—IMMERSION AND POURING.

The importance of a correct and convincing exposition of the Scriptural mode of Baptism.

§26. The world, at the present time, is greatly divided in its opinions in respect to the scriptural mode of Christian baptism. The Greek church practices immersion; the Roman Catholic church, sprinkling and affusion; the Nestorians and Armenians, immersion; most Protestant churches practice affusion and sprinkling; and the Baptist churches, with their numerous affiliated branches, many of

which have departed from the general standard of orthodoxy on other religious subjects, practice immersion.

This extensive diversity is not maintained in peace. The different denominations insist upon their particular modes of baptism as highly important to be adopted, to the exclusion of all others. The Baptist churches, especially, insist on immersion, not only as the scriptural mode of baptism, but as the only mode in which this ordinance can be administered. They deny that the baptisms of those churches which practice affusion and sprinkling, are baptisms, and consider them as possessing no validity whatever. Hence they regard the members of such churches as entirely unbaptized, and as having renounced, or essentially corrupted, one of the sacraments of the Christian church. On this ground they separate themselves from the entire body of Christians who practice affusion and sprinkling, and have no communion with them. They thus create an additional schism in the already divided body of Christ, contrary to that memorable prayer of the Saviour, that his disciples all may be one, as he and the Father are one, in order that the entire world may be brought to believe in his divine character and mission. John 17: 21. Churches which God has acknowledged, by bestowing his spirit upon them, and crowning their organizations with success and usefulness, their immersionist brethren do not acknowledge. All schisms are injurious. They impair the influence of Christianity generally, by placing its professors in opposition to each other. They give the impression to unbelievers, that the principles of the Christian system are uncertain; that they are matters of opinion and speculation merely, not of knowledge. They raise

an insurmountable obstacle to the general triumph of Christianity. Christianity cannot triumph till the essential unity of the church is re-established. Then the powers of earth and hell will not be able to prevent its triumph, or to protract, for any considerable time, the period of its depression.

If the scriptural mode of Christian baptism can be correctly and convincingly expounded, the immersionist schism may, after a time, be healed. No one who believes in the truth of Christianity, and who expects its final triumph, can doubt the practicability of making such an exposition. The scriptural doctrine on this subject must be capable of being clearly exhibited, whatever it is. A clear exhibition of it, must carry conviction to reflecting minds. If it does not triumph at once, it must, when it comes to be properly presented, gradually prevail.

Such a presentation must be made. The interests of truth, the honor and success of religion, the salvation of the world by an undivided church, delineated on the pages of inspiration, all conspire to demand it. The demand must be answered. God's Spirit, moving mysteriously on the minds of his people, will impel them to the work, till the truth shall be shown; and till it shall be so shown as to prevail.

The principal modes of Christian baptism are, immersion, pouring, and affusion and sprinkling. Affusion and sprinkling constitute, essentially, but one mode of baptism, and are used together, or one or the other is adopted indifferently by those who adopt these rites.

ARGUMENTS IN FAVOR OF IMMERSION.

Specification of the principal Arguments.

§27. 1. That the ordinary meaning of the word baptize, in the classic Greek writers, is to immerse or plunge in a liquid, generally in water.

2. That John's baptism was administered in the river Jordan.

3. That, in being baptized, persons went into the water, and came out of the water.

4. That baptism is a symbolical representation of the death, burial, and resurrection of Christ.

5. That immersion prevailed at an early period after the age of the apostles, and still prevails in the Greek church, and in other branches of the professed church of Christ in the East, which are the lineal descendants of the apostolic churches.

These five arguments are the foundation and support of the doctrine of immersion, as the scriptural mode of baptism. They are the premises of the immersionist conclusion. The conclusion drawn from them is, that baptism ought to be administered by immersion. Two things are always to be considered in order to determine the conclusiveness or inconclusiveness of reasoning.

1. The premises. The first thing to be considered in deciding on the validity of an argument, is, whether the premises are true. If the premises are not true, they can of course prove nothing.

2. The conclusion drawn from the premises. If the premises are found not to be true, further inquiry is unnecessary. But if they are found to be true, the next thing to be determined is, whether the

conclusion is a legitimate and necessary deduction from the premises, or from any one of them. If it is not, the argument is imperfect, and the conclusion false or uncertain. Every conclusion is uncertain, and should be presumed to be false, till true premises are found, from which it can be legitimately inferred.

The doctrine of immersion is inferred from five independent premises. If it is a legitimate and necessary inference from any one of them, and that premise is found to be true, then this doctrine must be admitted to be true. Still more must it be admitted to be true, if two or more of the above premises are found to be true, and at the same time to render the conclusion in favor of immersion legitimate and necessary.

First argument in favor of Immersion.

§ 28. The ordinary meaning of the word baptize, in the classic Greek writers, is to immerse; therefore, this word means to immerse, in the scriptures; and being applied in this sense to describe baptism, that rite must originally have been administered by immersion, and ought to be so administered now.

The definition of baptize, as this word is used in the classic Greek writers, is given by Donnegan, a popular Greek lexicographer, as follows: "To immerse repeatedly into a liquid; to submerge; to soak thoroughly; to saturate; hence to drench with wine; metaphorically, to confound totally; to dip in a vessel and draw."

These definitions are correct, so far as classic Greek usage is concerned; and the meaning of the

word in the New Testament, ought to be presumed to be in agreement with classic usage, unless evidence exists of a different usage among the Jewish Greek writers. If evidence exists of a different usage among the Jews who used the Greek language, that usage ought to be followed in the interpretation of this word in the New Testament, in preference to classic Greek usage.

It has already been shown (§ 3–7,) that a different usage did exist among the Jews. The Mosaic purifications are denominated baptisms. These were not immersions, but sprinklings and affusions, or washings. The modes of these baptisms were various. Hence they are called *various baptisms*. Heb. 9: 10.

Their title baptisms, therefore, did not depend upon any particular mode, otherwise the Mosaic purifications could not have been various baptisms; for they differed considerably from each other in respect to modes of administration. Yet they are referred to in Heb. 9: 10, as different or various baptisms. It appears, therefore, that the applications of water in different modes, such as sprinkling and affusion, or washing, are baptisms; and a Jewish usage is established in respect to the words baptize and baptism, entirely different from that of the classic Greek writers, in favor of sprinkling and affusion instead of immersion.

This usage is a legitimate rule of interpretation for the words baptize and baptism, in all cases where their meaning would otherwise be determined, in conformity with classic Greek usage.

The first argument, therefore, for immersion, as the scriptural mode of Christian baptism, is inconclusive. It does not prove the position which it is

adduced to prove; neither does it, in the real circumstances of the case, create any presumption in favor of that position.

The established Jewish usage, in favor of a different signification of baptize, and baptism from that which is common in the classic Greek writers, supercedes entirely the other and more remote rule of classic usage, and is itself the true rule, according to which these words ought to be interpreted in the New Testament.

Second argument in favor of Immersion.

§ 29. John's baptism was administered, principally, in the river Jordan. That, being administered in the river, it was probably administered by immersion, because a river would not have been necessary to sprinkle or wash from.

All the force which this argument can have, is to create a probability or presumption in favor of immersion; and this force may be counterbalanced by opposing evidence of any decisive kind.

The inspired record has already been shown (§ 21) to be indefinite, and not to declare with certainty, whether John baptized *at* the Jordan, or *in* the Jordan. If he only baptized at the Jordan, it may have been at a greater or less distance from the river, and still have been at the Jordan, in the common acceptation of that phrase.

But if he actually baptized in the Jordan, as appears to have been the case in the baptism of Christ, which is more circumstantially described than his other baptisms, this does not prove that he baptized by immersion.

Some of the Mosaic baptisms were required to be administered with running water. John may have made use of the same; and if he did, this is a reason why he should have baptized at the Jordan. Another reason for his holding his meetings near that river, may have been to accommodate the vast multitudes who attended on his ministry, with an ample supply of water for themselves and their animals.

These reasons are sufficient to account for John's having preached and baptized at the Jordan, and in other places where there were many streams, whether the mode of his baptism was by immersion, or by affusion and sprinkling. It does not, therefore, prove immersion. In order to prove immersion, it ought to be unaccountable on any other hypothesis. But it is not unaccountable on the hypothesis of affusion and sprinkling.

Besides, even if it did prove immersion in the case of John's baptism, it would prove nothing in respect to Christian baptism. For it does not appear that Christian baptism was administered in the river Jordan, or in any other streams. The Mosaic baptisms were administered in different modes; and John's baptism, for aught that appears, may have been administered in one mode and Christ's in another.

This argument, therefore, like the former, proves nothing.

Third argument in favor of Immersion.

§ 30. In being baptized, persons went into the water and came out of the water. This was entirely unnecessary for washing and sprinkling, unless the

washing was general, pertaining to the whole body. It therefore proves immersion.

The premise assumed in this argument requires proof. The passages (Matt. 3: 16, and Mark 1: 10,) generally relied on by immersionists, in proof of it, have been shown (§21,) to be indefinite, and not to teach with certainty any more than that, in the administration of John's baptism, the administrator and the subject both went *to* and *from* the water. The preposition, unfortunately translated *out of* in these passages, is very seldom, if ever, used in the sense of *out of; from* and *away from* being its appropriate meaning.

Acts 8: 38, 39, ought also to be translated in conformity with Matt. 3: 16, and Mark 1: 10. Properly translated, it reads as follows: "And Philip and the Eunuch both went down *to* the water, and he baptized him; and when they came up *from* the water, the Spirit of the Lord caught away Philip, and he saw him no more; and he went on his way rejoicing."

The preposition which I have translated *from*, in the above passage, is a different one from that used in the two other passages just considered. Before nouns denoting place, however, it signifies from and away from, equally with out of, and is so defined by the best lexicographers. See Donnegan, Bretschneider, and others. In this passage it is virtually restricted to the sense of from, by the relation of the clause in which it stands to the clause descriptive of the going down to the water. The mode of expression in that clause is the same which is used in Matt. 3: 16, and Mark 1: 10, where the accompanying preposition, expressing the relation of the *ascent* or *going up* to the water, signifies only *from* or *away from*, not out of. In those passages, therefore, the

descent or going down must have been *to* the water, because the ascent, or going up, was only *from* it. In this passage, therefore, it ought to be presumed to have a similar meaning, unless the context requires a different one. But the context does not require a different one. It admits either of the same or of another, and admits of the same equally well with the other. Therefore, the descent, or going down, in Acts 8: 38, is a descent or going down *to* the water. Consequently, the ascent, or going up, mentioned in the following verse, must be an ascent or going up *from* the water, not out of it.

A similar usage in respect to the preposition which I have translated *from*, is found in John 6: 23. "Howbeit there came other boats *from* Tiberias." Matt. 17: 9; "As they went down *from* the mountain." The preposition translated from, in these passages, is the same that expresses the relation of *the ascent* or *going up* to the water, in the case of Philip and the Eunuch.

The passages relied on by immersionists, therefore, to prove that, in the administration of Christian baptism, there was a going down *into* the water and a coming up *out of* it, fail of proving the position assumed. The premise of the third immersionist argument, therefore, being unproved, and not being known to be true, no legitimate conclusion can be deduced from it in favor of immersion.

But even if this premise was true, it would not prove immersion. In the ancient representations of the baptism of Christ by John, made by different artists, and handed down from the fifth century, the Saviour is constantly represented as standing up to the middle in water, and being baptized by pouring. There is a representation of this kind in the dome of

a Baptistry at Ravenna, in Italy, a building erected in 454, A. D.

In this piece, John the Baptist is represented as standing on the bank of the Jordan, holding a cross in his left hand, and in his right a shell of moderate size, from which he pours water on the head of Christ. Christ receives this standing naked, in the water up to his waist.

There is another similar representation preserved in Mosaic, in the church in Cosmedin, in Ravenna, which was erected 401, A. D. In this, also, Christ stands naked in the river, with the water reaching to his waist, and John, standing on the bank of the river, pours water upon his head from a small shell or cup. Other similar representations are preserved of later date; and some of which are considerably ancient, but of uncertain date.

These representations teach us the views entertained by Christians in those times, respecting the mode of baptism administered by John to the Saviour. They show that Christ was supposed to have gone into the Jordan naked, and there to have been baptized by John, standing on the shore and pouring water upon him.

This supposition is not more improbable than immersion. If, therefore, it could be proved that the subjects of John's baptism, went actually into the water to be baptized, and that the Eunuch baptized by Philip did the same, it would still be possible that the baptisms were administered by pouring or affusion, and that the going into the water was only preparatory to the reception of baptism, not any part, still less an essential part of the rite.

In the argument under consideration, therefore, there are two defects.

1. The premise is not proved, and cannot be shown to be true. Consequently, no legitimate conclusion can be drawn from it in favor of immersion.

2. The conclusion in favor of immersion is not a legitimate inference from the premise, if it was true· Therefore, if the premise was shown to be true, the conclusion would not legitimately follow. It would still be possible that the going into the water was only preparatory to pouring or affusion, and that the baptismal rite consisted essentially, not in going into the water, and not in being immersed in it after having gone into it, but in having water applied by affusion or pouring.

Fourth argument in favor of Immersion.

§31. Baptism is a symbolical representation of the death, burial, and resurrection of Christ. Immersion is necessary to furnish any analogy on which to found such a representation. Therefore, immersion is the scriptural and proper mode of baptism.

The premise of this argument is a hypothesis which depends for its support on two solitary passages of scripture, Rom 6: 3–5, and Col. 2: 12. These passages have been considered, (§25,) and have been shown not to afford any adequate support to this hypothesis. They admit of easy explanation on the supposition that baptism is to be administered by affusion and sprinkling, as well as on that of immersion. They contain a manifest allusion to the design of baptism but not to the mode of its administration.

The expression, buried with Christ by faith, is as significant and consistent as buried with Christ by

baptism; and being baptized to Christ is as significant, on the supposition of affusion and sprinkling, as on that of immersion. Being baptized to Christ, on either supposition, means the same thing. It means not being immersed or plunged into him, which would fall little short of being an absurdity, but being devoted to him by baptism as his disciples, or as his subjects and worshippers.

Besides, if it was the design of baptism to represent the death, burial, and resurrection of Christ, how did it represent these events before they occurred? Christian baptism was instituted and administered to multitudes before Christ died. John 4: 1. The disciples who administered these baptisms did not know as yet that Christ was to die; still less that he was to die and rise again. With what propriety could they have administered this rite, when they did not know and could not explain its meaning? With what propriety could subjects receive it without being instructed in its true import and design? According to the hypothesis that baptism represents the death, burial, and resurrection of Christ, the disciples, previous to the crucifixion, administered it in the most profound ignorance of its true import and design, and their converts received it in like ignorance.

The signification of baptism here supposed, was entirely different from that of the Jewish baptisms previously instituted; all of which were purifications, or symbols of moral and legal cleansing. Why was no explanation of this difference put on record by the Evangelists? Why was no allusion made to it in the entire gospel history?

If Christian baptism was to be understood as of similar import and design to previously instituted

baptisms, it required no explanation. But if it was now used for a purpose altogether new and unexampled, surely some intimation of this departure from previous customary usage was to be expected, and was necessary.

But no intimation of this kind is found in the New Testament. We conclude, therefore, that none was necessary; and that Christian baptism is of the same general import and significancy as the previously instituted baptisms practiced among the Jews.

Fifth argument in favor of Immersion.

§ 32. Immersion was the common mode of baptism at an early period after the age of the apostles, and has been handed down by tradition in the Greek, Nestorian, and Armenian churches, till the present time.

This argument is not drawn from the scriptures but from uninspired history. It is adduced as a supplement to the scriptural arguments in favor of immersion. The scriptural arguments in favor of immersion have been seen to fail entirely of establishing the position in favor of which they are adduced. Can the cause and claims of immersion, unsupported by scriptural evidence, find adequate support from uninspired history?

The fact of the early prevalence of immersion in the Christian church is freely admitted. This seems to have been the mode of baptism usually practiced in the times of Cyprian and Origen, in the third century of the Christian era. The premise of this argument, therefore, is acknowledged to be true. Is the conclusion a necessary inference from the premise?

If it is, the claims of immersion may yet stand; and extensive as the apostacy has been from the practice of this mode of baptism, the lost and wandering may yet be reclaimed and recovered. But if the conclusion is not legitimate, then immersion is without adequate support from any quarter, and the immersionist is the wanderer and schismatic, that must be reclaimed to scriptural truth and Christian duty.

The legitimacy of the conclusion in favor of immersion in this argument, depends upon the fact, whether it is possible that the church may have changed its mode of baptism in the interval between the third century of the Christian era and the times of the Apostles, or not. If such a change is possible, then this conclusion is not legitimate. It does not conform to the premise from which it is deduced. Such a change was manifestly possible. The discrepancy between scriptural and classical usage in respect to the signification of the words baptize and baptism, must have been highly favorable to it. The church enlarged itself, and from being limited to Jews, and persons acquainted with Jewish usages, it spread itself over the land of classic Greece, and throughout the Roman Empire, where a knowledge of classic Greek usage was common to most literary men. Learning, however, was confined to the few, and these were the standards of opinion for others.

Biblical learning was not extensive. When the classical scholar of Greece and Rome read the New Testament, he naturally interpreted it according to the most approved standards of Greek literature, just as multitudes of moderns, who ought to have known better, have done. The consequence was, that the same modes of speech which, to the well instructed

Jew, taught affusion and sprinkling, would to him teach immersion, or plunging in the water.

Add to this that the scriptural meaning of the word baptize was indefinite, that there were different modes of baptism possible, and that different modes had actually been instituted by Moses with the divine sanction; and is it not more than possible that, under such circumstances, a change was made? Would not a change be easy and almost natural? Would not this be especially so in an age when learning was confined to the few, and when Biblical learning was far less extensively and far less thoroughly cultivated than classical? Besides the change was plausible. It was taking nothing away, but was rather adding to the pre-established ordinances of sprinkling and affusion, on the supposition that they were pre-established.

The manner in which the ancient immersions were performed renders them suspicious. Subjects were immersed naked and in private; they were anointed with oil and exorcised for the expulsion of spirits; after immersion, they were dressed in a white uniform, as an emblem of their sanctification or moral cleansing.

Is this apostolic usage? Is this the unchanged institution of Christ? I think not. Several things are unquestionably added, which did not belong to Christian baptism as it was practiced by the apostles.

Baptizing persons naked and in private was an addition; anointing with oil and exorcising the subject for the expulsion of demons was a second addition; the white uniform put on after baptism was a third addition. These additions all bear testimony to the ignorance and superstition of the times. The persons who practiced them were not knavish, interested

impostors and deceivers. They were misguided Christians. The facts adduced above show their liability to be misled, and to what an extent they actually were misled, in respect to the very rite in question. Is the practice of these persons a safe guide in favor of a mode of baptism not taught in the scriptures? Is it of sufficient authority to show that this mode was the apostolic one, notwithstanding that the apostles themselves have not shown it in their writings? No. Such examples, as far as they agree with scriptural evidence, lend some confirmation to it. But where they deviate from it or go beyond it, they amount to nothing.

This argument, then, fails like all the others; and the last hope of immersion is lost.

The entire argument, therefore, in favor of immersion, when weighed in the balance of legitimate and conclusive reasoning, is found wanting. It does not establish the position assumed, and contributes nothing towards establishing it.

BAPTISM BY POURING.

§33. Pouring is a mode of Christian baptism for which some who discard immersion set up the claim of exclusive scriptural authority. Considered in respect to the amount of water made use of, it stands next to immersion. This mode of baptism was practiced at an early period in connection with immersion, or probably in connection with going into the water to a considerable depth, so that some part of the body, and the lower extremities, were entirely submerged, without a complete immersion of the whole body.

The representations handed down from the fifth century, which were noticed in § 29, are indicative of the prevalence of pouring at that period, and also of the prevalence, at that time, of the opinion, that pouring was practiced in John's baptism. John is represented in both cases as pouring water upon the Saviour. A similar representation has been preserved, for an indefinite period, on the door of a church at Beneventura, in Italy. Christ stands naked in the water, with his lower extremities submerged, and water is poured upon his head by John, standing entirely out of that element, from a small cup or dish. The picture is considered as quite ancient, but its precise date is not known.

A monument has been found near Naples, representing, in sculpture, the baptism of Argilulphus and Theolinda, King and Queen of the Longobardi, who occupied Beneventura in the sixth century. The sculpture was produced in the latter part of the sixth or beginning of the seventh century. The King and Queen are represented as standing naked in a bathing vessel, which is large enough in circumference for both of them to stand up together in it. They stand in a stooping posture. The top of the vessel does not quite come up to their middle. Water is poured upon them from a pitcher by a man in a military habit, who stands by the side of the vessel.

On the same monument is an engraving representing a person kneeling and in prayer by a bathing vessel. The bathing vessel is between one and two feet in height, that is, about one fourth the height of the worshipper, and of about the same diameter as height. In another part of the picture, persons are represented as kneeling on the ground, and receiving

baptism by water being poured upon them from a pitcher.

Other representations, both in sculpture and engraving, represent baptisms at periods not far from the time above referred to; and some of them, at uncertain periods, by pouring.

The antiquity of this mode of baptism is an evidence in its favor. But this alone is not sufficient to establish it as of scriptural authority. It is alledged, however, in favor of pouring, that, in the baptism of the Holy Ghost, the Divine Spirit is described as being poured out. Acts 2: 16, 17; 10: 45. Joel 2: 28.

The pouring out of the Holy Ghost on the day of Pentecost, is evidently the baptism with the Holy Ghost, mentioned Acts 1: 5, as to take place not many days from that time. But it is too slender a ground on which to establish a theory in respect to the scriptural mode of baptism with water; especially as none of the Mosaic baptisms appear to have been administered in that mode.

The pouring out of the Holy Spirit is itself a figurative designation of the Spirit's influence on the minds of men, and not a proper object of emblematical representation in baptism. Baptism should represent the effect of the Spirit's influence, which is cleansing, not the mode of that influence. The mode of the Spirit's influence is not explained in the scriptures, and is not a legitimate object of symbolical representations.

Pouring, therefore, is not adequately sustained as the scriptural mode of Christian baptism. The scriptural evidence on which it rests is fanciful and indecisive, and the historical evidence in its favor is drawn from too late a period, and accompanied by too

many questionable circumstances, to be entitled to any great confidence as an indication of apostolic usage. These circumstances have been adverted to in considering the historical argument for immersion.

CHAPTER VI.

MODE OF CHRISTIAN BAPTISM.—AFFUSION AND SPRINKLING.

Introductory Remarks.

§ 34. Having disposed of immersion and pouring, affusion and sprinkling remain to be considered. If any particular mode of Christian baptism is taught in the scriptures, it must be one or both of these. If one or both of these are not taught in the scriptures, we shall be compelled to conclude that no mode of baptism is enjoined, but that the church of Christ is left to its discretion in this matter, and may lawfully adopt one mode or other, as fancy or caprice may dictate. This, in the opinion of some, is the true state of the case. If it is a fact that there is no scriptural mode of Christian baptism, and that the subject is left indefinite, to be settled and altered as the feelings and judgment of men may dictate, the prospect of harmony and agreement on the subject, among the different branches of the Christian church, must be very unpromising. But if there is a well

established scriptural mode of administering this rite, one that can be clearly exhibited and satisfactorily understood; and if the evidences by which this appears are within the comprehension of common minds, then existing delusions may yet be dispelled, and a general agreement be attained among mankind on this subject. As, therefore, other modes are found wanting in scriptural authority, it is a matter of great interest to know whether those of affusion and sprinkling can be fully sustained.

Specification of the arguments in favor of Affusion and Sprinkling.

§35. 1. The modes of the Mosaic baptisms were principally by affusion and sprinkling.

2. The Jewish traditionary baptism before meals, consisted of a ceremonial washing of the hands.

3. The baptism of the Israelites at the time of crossing the Red Sea, under the direction of Moses, was by sprinkling.

4. It was predicted that Christ should cleanse mankind from sin, under the imagery of sprinkling.

5. Circumstantial evidence pertaining to the mode of Christian baptism is in favor of affusion and sprinkling.

6. Affusion and sprinkling are more suitable than immersion, to serve as modes of Christian baptism, on account of their greater significancy as modes of purification, and their greater convenience.

7. The servants of God under the New Testament dispensation, are described as being sealed in their foreheads.

First argument in favor of Affusion and Sprinkling.

§36. The modes of the Mosaic baptisms were principally affusion and sprinkling. Christian baptism, being subsequently instituted, and no specification of the mode of its administration being put on record, ought to be administered in the same mode as the previously instituted baptisms; therefore, it ought to be administered by affusion or sprinkling, or by affusion and sprinkling.

The principal Mosaic baptisms were of frequent occurrence. They were often repeated in the life of every true Israelite, and consequently must have been familiar to the Jews. If there is no injunction of a different mode in the scriptures, we are bound to adopt the modes previously established, and of unquestionable divine authority, rather than to introduce others of man's invention.

The propriety of this is obvious. Authorized modes and established precedents are of the nature of general laws. Deliberative bodies are governed by them in the transaction of business, courts are governed by them in the decision of cases, both in respect to property and life; and, according to them, kings rule and princes decree justice.

Affusion and sprinkling were modes of baptism in actual use at the time of the institution of Christian baptism, and they continued to be used by divine authority in the Mosaic baptisms, till some years after the crucifixion.

These divinely authorized modes of former and to some extent contemporary baptisms, are a rule for our direction in respect to Christian baptism, unless we have specific information enjoining a different

mode. But we have no such information; therefore, we ought to baptize by affusion and sprinkling. These modes are actually enjoined by precedents, which, in the circumstances of the case, are laws, and from which we may not lawfully depart without divine permission.

Second argument in favor of Affusion and Sprinkling.

§ 37. The Jewish traditionary baptism which was practiced statedly before meals, being a washing of the hands for the purpose of ceremonial cleansing, is an evidence of Jewish provincial usage, in respect to the meaning of the Greek words baptize and baptism, which favors affusion, or the application of water with the hand, as the appropriate mode of Christian baptism.

There is an allusion to this in Luke 11: 37, 38. "And as he (Jesus Christ) spake, a certain Pharisee invited him to dine with him. And he went in and sat down to meat. And when the Pharisee saw it he marvelled (or expressed surprise,) that he was not first *baptized* before dinner."

The verb which I have translated baptized, in this passage, is incorrectly rendered washed in the common English bible. It is the same which is used in all places where Christian baptism is spoken of, and it is never used in the New Testament to denote a secular washing of any kind. The rite referred to in this passage is, beyond all doubt, a baptism. The observance of it was so general among the Jews, and it was deemed so necessary, that the Pharisee

wondered that Christ did not perform it upon himself previous to sitting down to dinner.

In Matt. 15: 2, and Mark 7: 2, we are informed that the Scribes and Pharisees found fault because the disciples of Christ did not perform a ceremonial washing of their hands previous to partaking of their common meals. They denominate this neglect a transgression of the tradition of the elders, and refer to the hands of the disciples as being ceremonially *defiled* on account of it.

Here we have, in one case, a baptism before meals mentioned by that title, and in the other, a sacred washing of the hands as a rite of ceremonial purification. We have also proved, in former sections, that the Jewish purifications were baptisms. The purifications, therefore, referred to in Matthew and Mark, and the baptism referred to in Luke, are one and the same thing. This is evident from the following considerations:

1. Purifications are baptisms. The washing of the hands referred to in Matthew and Mark are purifications; therefore, they are baptisms. If they are baptisms they are baptisms practiced statedly before meals, and therefore are rites of the kind denominated baptism in Luke 11: 38.

2. The supposition that the washing of the hands as a ceremonial purification, mentioned in Matt. 15: 2, and in Mark 7: 2, is not a baptism, leads to the conclusion that the Jews practiced two religious rites of purification before meals; one of which consisted in the washing of the hands, and the other, according to the hypothesis of immersionists, in the immersion of the entire body.

Is this a fact? Were there two such rites prevalent among the Jews in the time of Christ? Has

immersion, before meals, ever prevailed in any country or in any age? These questions admit of an answer only in the negative.

The uniform practice of immersion, before meals, as a religious rite of purification, or for any other purpose, has never prevailed in any age or country, and cannot prevail. It is a yoke which is too heavy to be borne. It would be an oppressive yoke in any country, and at all seasons of the year. In such a country as Palestine, and in the winter season, it would, in respect to a large proportion of the inhabitants, be utterly impracticable.

The hypothesis of immersion, before meals, as a customary rite of religious purification among the Jews in the time of Christ and previously, is inadmissible on account of its impracticability, as well as for the entire want of any evidence whatever, in its favor. It is a mere figment of imagination, formed to sustain a theory, and undeserving of the least confidence.

It appears, therefore, that the baptism referred to in Luke 11: 38, where the Pharisee wondered that Christ was not first baptized before dinner; and the washing of the hands before meals, referred to in Matt. 15: 2, and Mark 7: 2, are one and the same religious rite. Consequently, persons were baptised by the washing of the hands; and the appropriation of the words baptize and baptism, to denote this washing, was according to the Jewish provincial usage of those times.

Hence the appropriation of the same words, without definition, to denote Christian baptism, indicates that this was a religious washing, not an immersion. A ceremonial washing is performed by affusion.

Third argument in favor of Affusion and Sprinkling.

§38. The allusion to the wetting of the Israelites with rain on the occasion of their being led across the Red Sea, by Moses, on dry land, and to their being wet by the Sea on that occasion, as baptisms, by Paul, proves that this word appropriately denoted sprinkling according to Jewish usage, and is an evidence in favor of sprinkling, as an appropriate mode of Christian baptism.

This allusion is contained in 1 Cor. 10: 1, 2. "Moreover brethren, I would not that ye should be ignorant that our fathers were all under the cloud, and all passed through the sea, and all were baptized to Moses by the cloud and the sea."

I have adopted the rendering *by* the cloud and *by* the sea, instead of in the cloud and in the sea, for reasons set forth in §25.

By is the proper rendering of the preposition here used in the original, when it stands before nouns denoting instruments, agents, or means. The nouns which here follow it, denote means. The baptisms were by means of the cloud, and by means of the sea.

How the Israelites were baptized by means of the cloud, is clearly shown by Ps. 77: 16–20. "The waters saw thee, O God, the waters saw thee and were afraid. The depths, also, were troubled. The clouds poured out water. The skies sent out a sound. Thine arrows, also, went abroad; the voice of thy thunder was in heaven. The lightnings lightened the world. The earth trembled and shook. Thy way is in the sea, and thy path in the great wa-

ters, and thy footsteps are not known. Thou leddest thy people like a flock, by the hand of Moses and Aaron."

It appears from this description, that the passage of the Red Sea was accompanied with the fall of rain. Clouds are spoken of as pouring out rain. The mode of the baptism of the Israelites by the cloud, therefore, must have been by sprinkling, the universal mode of the pouring out of water from clouds.

How they were baptized by the sea, remains to be inquired into. This could not have been by immersion, because we are expressly told, Ex. 14: 21, 22, "That the Lord caused the sea to go back, by a strong east wind, all that night, and made the sea dry land, and the waters were divided. And the children of Israel went into the midst of the sea upon the dry ground, and the waters were a wall to them on their right hand, and on their left."

The Israelites were not, therefore, immersed in the Red Sea. The apostle. however, tells us, that they were baptized by it. How was this baptism administered? The mode of the baptism of the Israelites by the Red Sea, is not explained. It was evidently, however, not an immersion, for the theory of the immersion of the Israelites in the Red Sea at the time of their crossing it, would be in contradiction to the Mosaic narrative.

Amid the fury of the storm and wind which accompanied the passage of the Israelites on this occasion, and with the sea standing as a wall on their right hand and left, it is not improbable that they were sprinkled with its spray. If so, their baptism, by means of the sea as well as that by means of the cloud, was administered by sprinkling.

According to New Testament usage, therefore, sprinkling is a legitimate mode of baptism.

Fourth argument in favor of Affusion and Sprinkling.

§39. The prediction, that Christ should purify men by sprinkling, which must be presumed to be fulfilled, by his administration of the Gospel dispensation, is an evidence in favor of sprinkling as an appropriate mode of Christian baptism, and consequently, the scriptural mode.

Isa. 52: 15, "So shall he sprinkle many nations." Ezek. 36: 25, 26, "Then will I sprinkle clean water upon you, and ye shall be clean. From all your filthiness, and from all your evils, will I cleanse you. A new heart also will I give you, and a new spirit will I put within you."

The first of the above passages relates directly to Christ, and declares what he was to do under the Gospel dispensation. The second passage is a declaration of God, as to what he will do during the same period.

If baptism is performed by sprinkling, it is a literal and beautiful fulfilment of these predictions. By means of this rite, Christ is now sprinkling many nations, and ceremonially cleansing them from all their filthiness and from all their idols.

If Christian baptism was to have been by immersion, the more natural and more expressive form of the above predictions would have been, *So shall he immerse many nations. Then will I immerse you in clean water, and ye shall be clean, &c.*

But the Holy Spirit made choice of the term *sprinkle*, rather than immerse, to describe this cleansing. Why then should he not be supposed to have made choice of the mode of sprinkling, rather than that of immersion, to represent the same in Gospel times? If sprinkling is an appropriate and expressive figure by which to represent the cleansing of men, as that cleansing was foretold, it is an equally appropriate and expressive symbol by which to represent that cleansing, when it is actually performed.

Fifth argument in favor of Affusion and Sprinkling.

§ 40. Circumstances attending the administration of Christian baptism by the apostles, in several instances, are favorable to the doctrine of affusion and sprinkling, and unfavorable to that of immersion.

In all cases where direct testimony is not decisive, or where it is difficult to be obtained to such an extent as is desired, circumstantial evidence is naturally resorted to, and is often highly serviceable to the cause of truth and justice. Many an important case that would otherwise be doubtful, is rendered clear by this means; and many an important truth, that would otherwise elude the grasp of the human understanding, is by this means reached and secured.

Circumstances cannot lie. Language may change, and the customary signification of words in one age may be lost in another, but circumstances do not vary. They speak the same language, and sustain the same relations to things on which they attend, in distant and romote periods, which they spoke and sustained at the time of their occurrence.

None of the circumstances of the apostolic baptisms, as recorded in the New Testament, indicate immersion. The only one which can be supposed, by any one, to indicate immersion, is that of the going to and from the water by Philip and the Eunuch related in Acts 8: 38, 39, improperly translated in the common bible, going *into the water* and *out of it.* See § 30.

Several circumstances relating to the Apostolic baptisms, are indicative of the more easy and convenient modes of affusion and sprinkling.

1. The number converted and baptized on the day of Pentecost. Acts 2: 41, "Then they that gladly received his word, were baptized; and the same day, there were added to them, about three thousand souls."

It appears from the context, that Peter began his public discourse about 9 o'clock, A. M. After this hour, he preached the gospel to the conviction and conversion of about three thousand persons. These persons were subsequently instructed sufficiently to receive baptism, their professions of faith taken, and their baptism actually administered on the same day. All this was done in a decent and orderly manner. For God is a God of order; and it was done under the direction of his Spirit.

We do not say that the immersion of these thousands, within the limited time allowed for their baptism, could not have been performed by the apostles and their assistants; but we are clearly authorized to consider it extremely improbable, from the fact of the great number baptized, and the short time allowed for their baptism, that this was performed by immersion. The apostles do not seem to have been surrounded by a great number of fellow-laborers at this

time. If not alone they were attended by comparatively few. In a meeting for the most important business, held a short time before, only a hundred and twenty attended. But few if any of these could have been qualified to administer baptisms. Yet three thousand baptisms were administered, and three thousand communicants received to the church in the little portion of that day which was not taken up with other religious exercises. Affusion and sprinkling take much less time than immersion. It is probable, therefore, from the greatness of the number, and the shortness of the time that could have been had for their baptism, that they were baptized by affusion and sprinkling.

2. Saul arose and was baptized, after he had been three days without food, and also without sight. The inspired narrative informs us, Acts 9: 17, 18, 19, that Annanias went, by divine command, into the house where he was, laid his hands on him, restored him to sight, and communicated to him the Holy Ghost. Upon the laying on of his hands, "there fell immediately from his eyes, as it were, scales, and he received sight forthwith, and arose and was baptized. And when he had received food he was strengthened."

Here is no going to the water, and no notice of any of the conveniences for immersion.

A blind man, weak from three days' anxiety and fasting, receives his sight, arises from his couch, that is, assumes the standing posture, and is baptized.

These circumstances agree well with affusion and sprinkling; but they do not agree with immersion.

3. The administration of baptism, in the night, in a prison, indicates affusion and sprinkling. Paul and Silas had been thrust into the inner prison at

Philippi. The doors of the prison were opened at midnight by an earthquake. Paul and Silas preached the Gospel with effect to the jailer and his family. The jailer's family appear, as is usual, to have occupied apartments within the prison. After the conversion of the jailer, he took the prisoners, Acts 16: 33–35, "the same hour of the night, and washed their stripes, and was baptized, and all his, straightway; and when he had brought them into his house, he set food before them and rejoiced, believing in God, with all his house. And when it was day, the magistrates sent officers, saying, let these men go."

The preaching was performed after midnight. The jailer and his family were converted, sufficiently instructed to receive baptism, and actually baptized before morning; and though the jailer had brought Paul and Silas to his own appartment, it appears from their subsequent declaration that they would not leave the prison, unless the proper officers came and fetched them out, that they could not yet have left the prison.

In these unpropitious circumstances, and before day, the jailer and his family were baptized. We cannot say with certainty that their immersion was impossible, but it certainly was improbable. All the circumstances of the case harmonize much better with the doctrine of affusion and sprinkling than with that of immersion.

Sixth argument in favor of Affusion and Sprinkling.

§ 41. Affusion and sprinkling are more suitable than immersion to serve as modes of baptism, on the

ground of their greater convenience and fitness for the purpose intended to be attained.

God's appointments are all founded in fitness and propriety. If some modes of baptism have a greater fitness than others, for the purposes intended to be attained by this rite, that fitness is a presumptive evidence in their favor as being the modes of God's choice and appointment.

Affusion is the most expressive and significant mode possible of applying water for ceremonial purification, or as a symbol of internal and moral cleansing; because it is the usual mode of physical cleansing. When we wash ourselves for purposes of physical cleansing, we usually apply the water by affusion. It would appear most fit, therefore, to adopt this mode of applying water in a rite intended to represent moral cleansing. The most usual and effectual mode of physical cleansing is the most expressive sign of moral cleansing. Affusion, therefore, is, of all modes of applying water, best adapted to be used in baptism as a symbol of moral cleansing.

A rite designed for universal application ought to be such as can be administered at all times, in all places, and to all classes of subjects. Baptism is designed for universal application. Therefore, a proper mode of baptism is one which can be administered in all places, at all times, and to all classes of subjects. Affusion and sprinkling have these properties; immersion has not. There are places where immersion cannot be administered; there are times and seasons of the year when it cannot be administered without great difficulty and danger to numerous subjects. There are persons in a certain condition and state of health, who are the proper

subjects of baptism, to whom immersion cannot be conveniently and safely administered at any time.

Affusion and sprinkling, therefore, have greatly the advantage of immersion, on the ground of convenience and fitness for the purpose intended to be accomplished by baptism. This convenience and fitness are evidences in their favor.

Seventh argument in favor of Affusion and Sprinkling.

§ 42. The servants of God, under the New Testament dispensation, are described as being sealed in their foreheads. Rev. 7: 3. "An angel cried with a loud voice," to agents who had power to hurt the earth, "saying, hurt not the earth, neither the sea, nor the trees, till we have sealed the servants of our God in their foreheads." The wicked are described as "those who have not the seal of God in their foreheads." Rev. 9: 4.

The word translated seal in the latter of the passages above referred to, is the same which is applied to describe circumcision in Rom. 4: 11, where it is called a seal of the righteousness of faith, or more properly translated, a seal of justification by faith.

Baptism has been shown to be the sealing ordinance of the Christian church. It seals the baptized as the Lord's. It is the initiatory rite administered to every adult convert on his introduction into the church, and is the divinely appointed seal of Christian discipleship.

To seal the servants of God, therefore, is to baptize them; and to seal them in their foreheads, is to baptize them in their foreheads. But if the seal of

baptism is applied to the forehead, as is expressly stated, it cannot be by immersion, and must naturally be by affusion and sprinkling. Immersion applies this seal to the whole body, affusion and sprinkling, to the forehead.

Conclusion in favor of Affusion and Sprinkling.

§ 43. On the whole, it appears clearly that affusion and sprinkling are the scriptural modes of Christian baptism, and the only mode which the scriptures sanction. The conclusion in favor of affusion and sprinkling is sustained by several independent arguments, each of which is sufficient of itself for the support of that conclusion.

To overthrow this conclusion, it is not enough to show that some one or more of the arguments which sustain it is inconclusive. It must be shown that no one of them is conclusive, and that all together are not so. If this can be done, the conclusion can be overthrown; otherwise not.

If the arguments adduced in favor of affusion and sprinkling are not conclusive, it must be on one or other of these two grounds. Either that the premise is false or uncertain, or that the conclusion is not a logical deduction from the premise, in cases where the premise is admitted to be true. Which of the premises in the foregoing arguments is false or uncertain? And if the premises are true, which of the conclusions are not legitimately inferred from their premises? Let the reader examine and ascertain, and having ascertained let him show.

If this deficiency cannot be shown, the conclusion must be admitted to be true, and to be as well en-

titled to universal adoption as the demonstrated truths of geometry and algebra.

But if the foregoing arguments should be found, on critical examination, to be defective, and not to establish the conclusion as true, it will remain to be inquired whether they render it probable. Many things can be proved to be probable which cannot be proved to be true; and the higher degrees of probability, in cases where certainty cannot be attained, have all the practical importance of certainty itself.

Truth is the highest principle of action to rational beings, and is always to be attained where the attainment of it is possible. But where truth cannot be attained with certainty, we are bound to be governed by probabilities. In such cases, strong probabilities are as valid principles of action as truth itself; and our obligations to submit to them are as imperative.

If, therefore, affusion and sprinkling have not been proved with certainty to have been the scriptural modes of baptism, has not this conclusion been rendered probable? Has it not been rendered highly probable? If it is only probable, we ought to adopt affusion and sprinkling in preference to modes which are not probable. If it is highly probable, we ought to adopt it in preference to modes which are in a less degree probable, and still more in preference to those which are in no degree probable.

The highest degree of probability is next to certainty, and does not differ from it to any appreciable extent. So far as all practical purposes are concerned, it does not differ from certainty at all.

If the arguments adduced in favor of affusion and sprinkling, therefore, fall short of establishing the conclusion deduced from them as certain, and yet

establish it as probable, the degree of probability which they establish will require to be estimated. If the probability established is of a high degree, the conclusion will possess a proportionably high value. If the degree of probability is indefinitely high, the conclusion will be an indefinitely near approximation to certainty, and will not be inferior to certainty in a practical point of view.

The value of a certain or even of a highly probable conclusion in favor of affusion and sprinkling, is immense. It is a basis of union and agreement among Christians, and will ultimately bring them together.

A conclusive argument has all the effect of a discovery. It may be disputed and opposed for a time; but it will, by and by, assert its claims with effect. When a truth is once discovered and demonstrated, it becomes the property of the human race, and attains a gradually increasing diffusion, until it is generally acknowledged.

A true estimate of Immersion.

§ 44. If immersion is an unscriptural mode of baptism, it ought not to be persisted in. It does not follow that persons are unbaptized because they are baptized in unscriptural modes. An unscriptural mode of baptism may be baptism, just as an unscriptural mode of partaking of the Lord's Supper may be the Lord's Supper. But in either case there can be no reasonable objection to keeping as close as practicable to scriptural modes. The nearest practicable approximation to the scriptural mode of receiving the Lord's Supper is to receive it in the

sitting posture, the usual posture in which we receive our meals. The apostles, in the first instance, received it reclining, the usual posture of receiving set meals at that time. The customary posture of receiving our usual meals having changed, there is a propriety in deviating from a scriptural mode which had no significancy, but was entirely accidental, and in adopting the more convenient one of sitting.

This change has respect to a mode which is accidental and insignificant, and is adopted only because it was in agreement with the usages of those times. It is changed in order to bring it into agreement with the usages of modern times.

But no such reasons exist for changing the scriptural mode of Christian baptism. Sprinkling and affusion were not accidental modes of administering this rite; neither are they without significancy. No change of manners has occurred or can occur which will render these modes inappropriate or undesirable. We are not, therefore, at liberty to depart from them. The prevailing departure from them in the case of immersionist churches, is a violation of Christian order and a breach of Christian duty, which nothing but ignorance can palliate, and which nothing can justify.

Modes which are significant, and which God has established, may not be departed from. They are as obligatory as the rites to which they appertain.

Immersion, however, is a valid baptism; because, though not a scriptural mode of administering this ordinance, it is used in the belief that it is scriptural, and is administered for the principal or most essential purposes of Christian baptism. The highest end of Christian baptism is that which it accomplishes as a sacrament or seal of consecration to God,

as his professed worshippers. That end is not lost sight of by immersionists; consequently, their baptisms are entitled to be considered valid, though not scriptural in respect to the mode.

CHAPTER VII.

SUBJECTS OF CHRISTIAN BAPTISM.

Adult converts who have not previously been baptized.

§ 45. There is a general agreement among Christians, that all adult persons who have not previously been baptized, are appropriate subjects of Christian baptism when they become Christians. Persons become Christians by receiving Christianity as a system of truth, adopting its principles, and obeying its laws. All unbaptized adult persons, therefore, who receive Christianity as true, adopt its principles and obey its laws, are entitled to receive Christian baptism. It is the duty of all adult persons who are not Christians to become such; and having become such, if unbaptized, it is their duty to receive baptism.

So far, the scripture doctrine respecting the subjects of Christian baptism is clear and unembarrassed, and generally understood by Christians of all orders.

Christian baptism is to be administered but once to the same subject.

§46. It is further obvious that we have no scriptural authority for administering Christian baptism but once to the same subject. The scriptures do not authorize a repetition of this rite in any case whatever. It may not, therefore, be lawfully repeated. To repeat it is to transcend our legitimate authority, and acting without authority our action becomes void. No persons, therefore, who have once been duly baptized, can be again appropriate subjects of baptism. Their second baptism is without divine authority, and is therefore not a valid ordinance.

Backsliders, when reclaimed, may renew their covenant with God and their profession of religion, but they may not lawfully be baptized anew. So those baptized in infancy, on the supposition that infant baptism is agreeable to the scriptures, may enter in covenant with God and his people when they become adults, but they may not be baptized again.

Question respecting Infant Baptism.

§47. Whether infants are appropriate subjects of baptism on the ground of the faith of their parents, is a question which has greatly divided and agitated the church for more than two hundred years past. I is a point in Christian doctrine that ought to be settled beyond reasonable dispute. God designed his church to be one. A diversity of sentiments on the question whether infants are appropriate subjects of Christian baptism, together with a corresponding di-

versity respecting the mode of baptism, has rent it asunder into separate bodies, holding no communion with each other.

These diversities of sentiment must be removed, and the church re-united, before the entire conversion of the world. The legitimate mode of removing them is to show what the true scripture doctrine is on the subject of the title of infants to Christian baptism, with such clearness and force of argument, and with such fulness of illustration, that all sensible persons will be able to understand it. This it is proposed to do on the present occasion.

ARGUMENTS AGAINST THE BAPTISM OF INFANTS.

§48. 1. There is no specific precept for baptizing them.

2. There is no unquestionable example of infant baptism in the New Testament.

3. Infants are not the subjects of faith and repentance, and therefore are not qualified to receive baptism.

4. The covenant relations of God and men have been so changed in the Christian dispensation, that infants are no longer included with their parents in the religious covenant which subsists between God and his people.

First argument against the baptism of Infants.

§49. There is no specific precept for baptizing infants in the New Testament; therefore, they ought not to be baptized.

The premise of this argument is admitted. There is no specific precept for the baptism of infants in the New Testament. The conclusion, however, is not a legitimate deduction from this premise.

Laws are of two kinds, general and specific. A general law is one which applies to two or more specific cases, or classes of cases. A specific law is one which applies to a single case or a single class of cases only. It is not possible to make specific laws to meet all cases; and it is not desirable to have them if it was possible. A comparatively few general laws are sufficient to meet an immense variety of cases. One advantage of general laws is, that it takes less time and labor to learn them than it would take to learn specific laws, comprehending all the cases to which they apply. The scriptures deal extensively in general laws. The ten commandments are beautiful examples of these. They apply to thousands of various cases.

If there is no specific law in the New Testament requiring the baptism of infants, it remains to be ascertained whether there is any general law requiring it. The absence of a specific law is no proof of the absence of obligation, provided a general law embraces the subjects to which that obligation appertains.

Specific laws are only necessary to reach cases which general laws cannot reach.

The want of an express precept for baptizing infants, therefore, is no evidence against the scriptural authority of infant baptism. Because that authority may be vested in general laws, and if so, specific laws are not necessary to establish it.

Besides, many divine laws are not revealed to us in the form of precepts. Even in cases where they

were originally delivered in that form, the revelation of them to us may be in a different form.

This is the case with the law respecting the Christian Sabbath. The observance of the Christian Sabbath is not enjoined by precept in the New Testament, still less by a specific precept. It is amply enjoined, however, by other means, and is one of the bulwarks of the Christian faith. So, for aught the above argument shows, it may be with the baptism of infants. It may be enjoined by the general law relating to the baptism of disciples; and if so, it is as really our duty to extend the application of this rite to infants, as if we had explicit laws requiring it.

It appears, therefore, that the absence of precepts or commands, either general or particular, does not prove the non-existence of laws; because laws may be revealed in other forms besides that of commands. It appears further that the absence of specific laws does not prove the non-existence of obligation; because obligation may be created by general laws, binding us to perform particular duties comprehended with other duties under those laws, and expressed only in general terms.

The want of a specific precept for baptizing infants does not, therefore, invalidate the authority of infant baptism. It only refers us to a more general law, relating to the subjects of baptism, to see whether infants are comprehended among the other subjects of this rite or not.

If infants are included in a general law respecting the subjects of baptism, that general law will possess all the binding force in favor of the baptism of infants which could belong to a specific law.

The first argument against the baptism of infants, therefore, is a failure. It proves nothing against the doctrine which it is adduced to disprove.

Second argument against the baptism of Infants.

§50. There is no specific example of the baptism of infants in the New Testament. It is incredible that this should have been the case, if infant baptism had been practiced by the apostles. Therefore, the baptism of infants is not an apostolic usage.

The premise of this argument is admitted as in the former case, and as in the former case the conclusion is denied. It would be very natural to look for specific examples of infant baptism in the New Testament, provided infants were baptized by the apostles. But the absence of such examples does not prove that infants were not baptized.

If it can be proved that infants were appropriate subjects of Christian baptism, and that the law determining the subjects of this rite, clearly comprehended them, we are authorized to conclude that they were baptized, notwithstanding that no specific record is made of their baptism in the New Testament.

The title of infants to baptism depends upon a law including them among the subjects of this rite, not upon the contingency of specific examples being put on record in the scriptures, of obedience to this law by the apostles. Examples of obedience by the apostles add nothing to the force of laws which they illustrate, and the want of recorded examples detracts nothing from it.

If the baptism of infants is according to Christian law, it was practiced by the apostles. The position that, if infants were baptized by the apostles, some specific example of it must have been left on record in the New Testament, is without adequate founda-

tion. It is an unauthorized assumption which has never yet been proved and never can be proved.

Examples of infant circumcision occur but seldom in the Old Testament. Century after century passes away without the occurence of any. Infant baptism may not have had a greater claim to the notice of the writers of the New Testament, than infant circumcision had to that of the writers of the Old Testament.

The absence of any examples of circumcision during long periods of the Old Testament history, does not prove the disuse of infant circumcision during those periods. No more does the absence of any specific examples of infant baptism in the New Testament history, prove that infants were not baptized in those times.

Third argument against the baptism of Infants.

§51. Infants are not the subjects of faith and repentance, and therefore are not qualified to receive baptism.

In the case of adults, baptism naturally follows faith and repentance. The order of duties is, first, faith and repentance; second, baptism. Hence the expressions, "He that believeth and is baptized," and "Repent and be baptized." This, however, does not prove that infants must repent and believe in order to be baptized.

Repentence and faith, are indispensable religious duties incumbent on adults. Therefore, they must perform them in order to be baptized. These duties are not incumbent on infants. Therefore, infants need not repent and believe in order to be baptized.

It is no where explicitly stated in the scriptures, that faith and repentance must precede baptism, in the case of adults. This doctrine, however, is taught with sufficient clearness by implication. We do not find it explicitly stated in the scriptures, but we infer it, legitimately, from what we do find there. To this extent, our inference in respect to the necessary precedence of faith and repentance to baptism, is legitimate, but no farther. Those passages from which we infer that adults must repent and believe in order to be baptized, furnish grounds for no such legitimate inference in respect to infants.

The scripture requirements of faith and repentance, have respect to adults, not to infants. They furnish no evidence, therefore, against the fitness of infants to receive baptism.

The propriety of applying baptism to infants, equally with adults, is clearly shown by the Mosaic baptisms, several of which were applicable to them. The infantile state is no necessary disqualification for receiving Christian baptism, more than it was under the former dispensation for receiving the Mosaic baptisms.

Baptism has the same symbolical meaning when applied to infants, which it has in application to adults. It is in respect to them, as it is in respect to adults, a seal of discipleship to Christ, and a mark of consecration to God, as his servants and worshippers. Baptism does not mark the infant as a believer or a penitent, but it does, equally with adult baptism, mark its subject as a consecrated person, and seal to that subject, the promised grace of God. It also seals the obligation of the subject, to serve and worship God.

It appears clearly, therefore, that the want of faith and repentance, on the part of infants, is no disqualification for baptism, and no evidence that they are not to be baptized.

Fourth argument against the Baptism of Infants.

§52. The covenant relations of God and man have been so changed, in the Christian dispensation, that infants are no longer included, with their parents, in the religious covenant which subsists between God and his people.

A change of covenant relations between God and his people, is supposed, by some, to have been predicted in Jer. 31: 31–34. "Behold, the days come, saith the Lord, that I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel, and with the house of Judah, not according to the covenant that I made with their fathers in the day that I took them by the hand, to bring them out of the land of Egypt, (which, my covenant, they broke, although I was a husband to them, saith the Lord.) But this shall be the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel: After those days, saith the Lord, I will put my law in their inward parts and write it in their hearts, and will be their God and they shall be my people. And they shall teach no more, every man his neighbor and every man his brother, saying, know the Lord, for they shall all know me, from the least to the greatest of them, saith the Lord: For I will forgive their iniquity, and I will remember their sin no more."

This passage is quoted at large in Heb. 8: 8–12, and applied to the gospel dispensation, as being one of greater perfection than the Mosaic.

The doctrine of the new covenant, made between God and man under the gospel dispensation, is made use of, by the apostle, to prove the superiority of Christ, to the Levitical priesthood. The ministry of Christ is claimed to be more excellent, than that of the Levitical priesthood, by as much as the covenant of God with man, under the Christian dispensation, exceeds in excellence, that made with the Israelites at their departure from Egypt.

The superior excellence of the Christian to the Mosaic covenant, consisted, not in the exclusion of infants from a joint interest with their parents, but in the actual conversion and sanctification of men. Under the Mosaic covenant men were not generally converted; under the Christian covenant, conversion should become, not only general, but universal.

The exclusion of children from a joint interest with their parents in the Christian covenant, receives no support, whatever, from the inspired description of this covenant, and is not to be admitted without evidence. We are not authorized to suppose the Christian covenant to differ from the Mosaic, any farther than a difference can be clearly proved from the scriptures. No difference can be proved from the scriptures in respect to the joint interest of children, with their parents, in covenant blessings. Therefore, none ought to be assumed.

On the whole, it appears, that the arguments against infant baptism, are not conclusive. They do not prove, that infants ought not to be baptized. It remains to determine whether they ought to be baptized.

SPECIFICATION OF ARGUMENTS IN FAVOR OF INFANT BAPTISM.

§53. 1. Membership of children in the Christian church.

2. Analogy of Christian baptism to circumcision.

3. Perpetuity of the Abrahamic covenant.

4. Designation of the subjects of Christian baptism, by general terms.

5. Absence of any exclusion of infants from baptism.

6. Provision for the early conversion of children.

7. Testimony of the early Christian fathers.

8. The blessing of God on infant church-membership and baptism.

CHAPTER VIII.

CHURCH-MEMBERSHIP OF CHILDREN.

FIRST ARGUMENT IN FAVOR OF INFANT BAPTISM.

§54. The children of church-members are entitled to be admitted to the Christian church, on their parents' account.

The doctrine of infant baptism is mainly important, as it is connected with other doctrines respecting the church relations of the children of church-members. Disconnected with those other doctrines,

it sinks into insignificance, and is comparatively unimportant. Connected with them, and sustained by them, it assumes an importance, scarcely, if at all, inferior to that of adult baptism.

First argument in favor of the Church-membership of Infants.

§55. One of the affiliated doctrines connected with infant baptism, and one on which the administration of baptism to infants mainly depends, is the doctrine of the church-membership of infant children in consequence of their position in the families of church-members. The principle of admitting children to the church, on account of their position in pious families, was established in the time of Abraham. This usage was probably of patriarchal origin, and for aught that appears, is as old as the church itself. Long before the time of Abraham, the church of God was propagated from generation to generation, in the line of family descents, and the sons of God appear to have been made so, by parental discipline. Gen. 5: 21–32 6: 2; The line of descent from Seth, was the line of the Antediluvian patriarchs; and, apparently, of the Antediluvian saints.

But whether instituted before or not, in the time of Abraham, the church-membership of the children of pious parents, was clearly and explicitly established. Of this, the circumcision of infants was a seal. The principle of the membership of infants, in the church of God, was incorporated into the Mosaic dispensation, and its divinely appointed seal adopted. Before the Mosaic dispensation was closed, that of

Christ commenced. For a time, that is, during the public ministry of Christ and till the abrogation of the Jewish rites at the time of the conversion of Cornelius, both dispensations were contemporaneous. The Jewish converts were, at the same time, both Jews and Christians. They observed all the institutions of Moses, and also, the additional institutions of Christ.

The Christian church was, at this time, a division of the Jewish. The same persons were members of both. Till the divine communications made to Peter, at the time of the conversion of Cornelius, the apostles seem not to have had the least idea of the abrogation of the Mosaic rites. Up to this time, the Christian church was a reformed branch of the Jewish, embracing all the essential features and principles of Judaism. The church-membership of infants, being a feature of Judaism, established by divine authority, must have been retained. To suppose its abrogation, in the absence of the least vestige of evidence to sustain such a supposition, is absurd.

In the rejection of the unbelieving Jews, and the abrogation of the sacrifices, circumcision, and other Mosaic and patriarchal rites, nothing is said of the principle of the membership of children in the church. This principle, and the usage founded on it, cannot be abrogated and abolished, without being mentioned or alluded to. They are, therefore, still in force, and belong to the christian church as legitimately, as they did to the Jewish.

That part of the Jewish church which received Jesus Christ, became a Christian church without ceasing to be a part of the Jewish church, and without abandoning any of the legitimate principles of Judaism. They did not at first and for some years,

that is, till the conversion of Cornelius, omit any of the Jewish rites. This branch of the Jewish church came off from the other. They, of course, took off their children with them. Not to have done so, would have been contrary to one of the essential principles of Judaism, and contrary to every dictate of humanity and piety.

The Christian church in its first establishment, during the life of Christ, was, simply, a sect of Jews, and a reformed branch of the Jewish church. As such, it continued to adhere to all the divinely appointed Jewish ceremonies. When the unbelieving and anti-Christian part of the Jewish church was rejected, and became utterly reprobate, the Christian part continued to be the same body, essentially, as it had been before; its essential principles being unchanged, but certain Mosaic and patriarchal rites being laid aside. This church, therefore, is but a continuation of the Jewish church in a different form and with a more simple religious service, founded on the same principles and for the same objects. It is built on the foundation of the patriachs and prophets, as well as on that of the apostles.

Before its change from the Jewish to the Christian organization, the church consisted of adults and their children. When the Christian organization was completed, and the Jewish not dissolved, as was the case after the resurrection, till the time of the conversion of Cornelius, a period of some years, infants were still included by virtue of the Jewish organization. The abrogation of the Mosaic and patriarchal rites, which followed at the time of the conversion of Cornelius, did not affect the relations of children. Therefore, those relations continue to be the same as before, and the membership of infants in the

church, is as legitimate a principle of Christianity, as it was of Judaism.

The principle of the membership of children in the church of God, established in the time of Abraham, was incorporated in the Mosaic dispensation, and no change in respect to it being revealed or intimated in the New Testament, must be concluded to have passed into the Christian church, and to have become incorporated in the Christian dispensation.

This principle having been established by divine authority, must continue till it is revoked by the same.

It appears, therefore, that the children of church-members are entitled to be received as church-members, and that all children who belong to pious families are, in consequence of their position in those families, entitled to share the enjoyment of this privilege with the children of pious parents, as under the former dispensations.

Second argument in favor of Church Membership of Infants.

§56. The scriptural authority of the church membership of infants, may be proved more directly by the explicit declarations of Christ. Math. 19: 13, 15. "Then were there brought to him little children, that he should put his hands on them and pray; and the disciples rebuked them: but Jesus said, suffer the little children and forbid them not to come to me, for such is the kingdom of heaven."

The narration of this transaction, occurs almost in the same words, in Mark 10: 13, 16; and in Luke 18: 15, 17. Luke denominates the children brought

to Christ, infants; and Mark says, in addition to what is said by the other evangelists, that "Jesus took them in his arms and blessed them."

Why the disciples rebuked persons for bringing children to Christ on this occasion, we are not informed. Perhaps it subjected them to some inconvenience, or interfered with some favorite arrangements for business or pleasure. Possibly they thought the matter of too little consequence to occupy their time, and that of their master, and to detain them from other engagements. Whatever their reasons were for finding fault on this occasion, with the bringing of children to Christ for his blessing, they were not sustained by the Divine Saviour. He viewed their conduct in relation to this matter, with deep displeasure, and required them in future to abstain entirely from making opposition in any case to the bringing of children to him. Mark 10: 14.

The phrase, suffer little children to come to me and forbid them not, is more than usually energetic. It expresses an injunction both positively and negatively. Suffer them to come, is a positive injunction; and forbid them not to come, is the same injunction expressed negatively. The whole expression is equivalent to saying, suffer little children by all means to come to me for my blessing, and on no account prevent or hinder their coming.

Some have endeavored to elude the force of this, by saying, that it described children of sufficient age to come of their own accord, not such as might be brought. Such an evasion savors more of puerile trifling, than of serious and intelligent reasoning.

The nature of the coming referred to, is clearly explained by the context. It was such a coming as was practiced by the children brought to the Savior

on that occasion; the coming of infants, the coming of such as could appropriately be taken in the arms to receive a blessing. To come to Christ in this sense, is the same as to be brought to him. This the Saviour commands the disciples to suffer and by no means to oppose.

The reason assigned for suffering children to come to Christ for his blessing, is expressed in the following words: "For of such is the kingdom of heaven." The antecedent of the relative word *such*, is children. Such, therefore, denotes children in the present case; and putting *children* in the place of the word *such*, which denotes them; the whole passage reads thus: Suffer the little children to come to me and forbid them not, for of children is the kingdom of heaven.

To say that children are of the kingdom of heaven, is the same as to say, that they belong to it. To evade this conclusion, some have proposed to interpret *such* not as denoting children, but adult persons resembling children, or of a child-like simplicity and humility. This interpretation cannot be admitted, for the following reasons.

1. The antecedent word to which such relates, and for which it stands, is children, not persons resembling children. The meaning of *such* depends upon the word for which it stands, and is determined by that word. If it stood for persons resembling children, and related to words denoting such persons as its antecedent, it would denote them, but standing as it does for the word children, and relating to that word as its antecedent, it denotes children.

2. The relation predicated of the persons denoted by the word such, is assigned as a reason for suffering children to come to Christ. That which is a reason for suffering children to come to Christ,

must pertain to children, not merely to adults of a child-like disposition. Therefore, *such*, the subject of this proposition, must refer to children, otherwise the reasoning of the Saviour is inconclusive. The interest of child-like adults in the kingdom of heaven, is no reason whatever for suffering children to come to Christ. It is only a reason for suffering child-like adults to come to him.

Of such is the kingdom of heaven, therefore, means of children is the kingdom of heaven; that is, that children as well as adults, are subjects of the kingdom of heaven.

But what is the kingdom of heaven, as the phrase is generally used in the gospels? I answer it is the Christian church. In proof of this, the following passages may be adduced. Matt. 3: 2. "Repent for the kingdom of heaven is at hand." So Matt. 4: 17, 10: 7. Matt. 13: 24. "The kingdom of heaven is like a man sowing good seed in his field." See also, verses 31, 33, 44, 45, 47. The phrase kingdom of God, is used as synonymous with kingdom of heaven. Mark 1: 14, 15. "Now after John was put in prison, Jesus came into Gallilee, preaching the gospel of the kingdom of God, and saying, the time is fulfilled and the kingdom of God is at hand; repent ye and believe the gospel."

Luke 4: 43. "And he said to them, I must preach the kingdom of God to other cities also."—Luke 6: 20. "And he lifted up his eyes on his disciples, and said blessed be ye poor, for yours is the kingdom of God." Acts 19: 8. "And entering into a synagogue he spake boldly for the space of three months, disputing and persuading the things concerning the kingdom of God." Acts 28: 30, 31. "Paul dwelt two years in his own hired house, and

received all that came to him, preaching the kingdom of God, and teaching those things which concern the Lord Jesus, with all confidence, no man forbidding him."

The church of God is his kingdom on earth. God is its king, gives it laws, establishes its offices and ordinances, and administers, by means of those offices and in modes of his appointment, its government. It is a spiritual kingdom not established for secular purposes, but for religious purposes.

Of this spiritual kingdom infants are subjects. This is equivalent to saying that infants are members of the church of Christ. We have, then, the doctrine of infant membership in the church of Christ, explicitly asserted by Christ himself, and asserted as a reason why infants should be brought to him for his blessing.

The phrase, kingdom of heaven, is interpreted by some, as referring to the kingdom of glory, and not to the church of Christ on earth. This interpretation is objectionable, on the following grounds:

1. Kingdom of heaven having become a common title of the Christian church, ought throughout the evangelical history, to be interpeted in that sense, unless in cases where the context will not admit of this interpretation.

2. The participation of infants in the kingdom of Christ on earth, is a more direct reason for the conduct enjoined, than their participation in the fellowship of his kingdom above. When two interpretations are admissable, that which assigns a reason most to the point, other things being equal, is always to be preferred. Therefore, the interpretation of kingdom of heaven to denote the kingdom or church of Christ on earth, is in this case to be adopted.

Third argument in favor of the Church Membership of Infants.

§57. A third argument in favor of the membership of infants in the Christian church, may be deduced from Rom. 11: 16, 17. "For if the first fruit be holy, the lump is also holy, and if the root be holy, so are the branches. And if some of the branches be broken off, and thou, being a wild olive-tree, wert grafted in among them, and with them partakest of the root and fatness of the olive-tree, boast not against the branches."

In this passage, the church of God is compared to an olive-tree. The olive-tree previous to the breaking off of some of its branches, was the Jewish church before the rejection of the greater part of that nation on account of their unbelief. The tree was not destroyed, but only some of its branches broken off. This shows that the church was not dissolved, but passed unchanged from the Mosaic to the Christian dispensation; as it had previously done from the Patriarchal to the Mosaic dispensation.

Some of the branches were not broken off. The believing part of the Jewish church continued in their primitive church relations, and were the Jewish church modified by the omission of certain specified Mosaic rites, and the introduction of certain specified Christian rites.

The grafting in of branches from the wild olive-tree, denotes the admission of Gentiles to the church of God to partake of the genial influence of church principles and institutions, without having been previously proselyted to Judaism.

The Jewish church thus modified, by the excision of a part only of its branches, and the grafting in of

others to occupy their place, and by the omission of certain Jewish rites and the adoption of certain Christian rites, is the Christian church of succeeding times.

The roots and trunk and a part of the branches of this church-tree are the same as formerly. This denotes the essential unity of the Jewish and Christian churches. They are of one stock, and are one continuous body.

It is not true, as some have supposed, that the Jewish church was a secular establishment, and that the Christian church is a spiritual one. Both are spiritual. Both are alike in this respect, because one is a continuation of the other.

Judaism, as it existed previously to the establishment of Christianity, and as it was constituted by divine authority, is to be distinguished from that Judaism, which the apostles subsequently condemned as involving the doctrine of justification on the ground of meritorious obedience, and as at the time consisting in uncommanded and therefore useless ceremonies.

The Judaism of the accepted patriarchs and prophets was one thing, that of the rejected Jews was another. The former was in essential agreement with Christianity; the latter was in irreconcileable opposition to it. The former was spiritual; the latter carnal.

It appears, on the whole, therefore, that the representation of the church under the emblem of a tree, and that of the excision of the unbelieving Jews, by the excision of some branches of this tree, while the others remain, clearly proves the identity of the Jewish and Christian churches. Hence it follows that the

membership of infants, which prevailed in the Jewish church, must be considered as continuing in the Christian church.

Fourth argument in favor of the Church Membership of Infants.

§58. A fourth argument in favor of the church membership of children, is drawn from the application of the titles of church members to denote them in the scriptures.

The titles of church members are saints or holy persons, and faithfuls. The latter is in some cases improperly translated believers. Both these terms are applied in the new testament to denote children.

§ 59. (1.) Children of church members are called saints, or holy persons. 1 Cor. 7: 14. "For the unbelieving husband is sanctified by the believing wife, and the unbelieving wife is sanctified by the husband, else were your children unclean, but now are they holy."

This passage occurs as an argument to prove that married church members may lawfully live with unchristian companions. The established rule on the subject of matrimonial relations among the Jews was the opposite of this. The Jew might not live with a heathen companion. Hence, in the time of Ezra, connections of this kind were forcibly dissolved by the authority and influence of that prophet. See Ezra 10: 1–17.

Under the Christian dispensation, a milder law prevails. A holy husband makes the wife so far holy as that it is lawful for him to live with her as a com-

panion; and a holy wife makes the husband so far holy, that it is lawful for her to live with him. This representation is founded on the Jewish law of defilement. A defiled object rendered all objects which came in contact with it defiled. So, under the Christian dispensation, a Christian companion rendered an unchristian one holy, in a legal sense, as under the former dispensation, a defiled object rendered a clean one defiled. The defilement thus created under the Mosaic dispensation was entirely ceremonial. So the sanctification effected by the Christian companion is only ceremonial or figurative, and is the basis of lawful companionship. This language is used with reference to the disability created by impiety for lawful companionship with the saints under the former dispensation. It signifies only the removal of that disability. The removal of all disabilities for companionship with Christians on the part of persons who are not Christians, is fully settled by a reference to the position of the children of such connections.

If such connections had not been lawful, and the unchristian companion had been accounted unclean, that is, unfit for Christian companionship, the children, as under the former dispensation, would also have been accounted unclean. In the case of the Israelites, the children of mixed marriages were required to be excluded from any participation in Jewish church privileges equally with their heathen parents. Ezra 10: 3.

Under the Christian dispensation, the apostle informs us that such children are holy. He mentions it not as something that was new to his Corinthian brethren, but as something which was well known,

and could therefore be made use of to illustrate less obvious truths.

According to the Mosaic law, the people of God were the clean or holy, and all others were the unclean. Hence it is said, Isa. 52: 1, "Awake! awake! put on thy strength, O Zion! Put on thy beautiful garments, O Jerusalem, the holy city; for henceforth there shall no more come into thee the uncircumcised and the *unclean*." Ezek. 44: 23; "They (the priests and Levites,) shall teach my people the difference between the *holy* and *profane*, and cause them to discern between the *unclean* and the *clean*." The clean and unclean, in these passages, are titles of the pious and wicked. Clean is extensively used in the sense of holy, as in Job 11: 4; 15: 14; 33: 9. Isa. 52: 11. Jer. 13: 27. Ezek. 36. 25.

A similar usage prevails in the New Testament. Holy, commonly translated saint, is applied extensively, in the New Testament, a sa title of members in the church of Christ. Of this, the following passages are examples:

Acts 26: 10. "And many of the saints did I shut up in prison, having received authority from the chief priests." Rom. 15: 25; "But now I go to Jerusalem to minister to the *saints*." 2 Cor. 1: 1; "To the church of God, which is at Corinth, with all the *saints* which are in all Achaia." Eph. 1: 1; "To the *saints* which are at Ephesus, and to the *faithfuls* in Christ Jesus." Phil. 1: 1; "To all the *saints* in Christ Jesus which are at Philippi, with the bishops and deacons."

If children, where either of the parents is a church member, are not unclean but holy, this must be understood according to the meaning of the terms unclean and holy, taken in connection with the nature

of the subjects to which they are applied. According to the meaning of the terms unclean and holy, it must refer to the separation of such children from the children of unbelievers, and their consecration to God. According to the nature of the subjects spoken of, which are children, not adult persons, it must denote a separation of such children solely on account of their position in Christian families.

This was analogous to what occurred under the Mosaic dispensation, and proves an agreement of the Mosaic and Christian dispensations in having the children of believers included among the acknowledged and professed people of God.

If children were reckoned as church members, then they were not *unclean* but *holy*. If they were not reckoned as church members, they were unclean in the same sense in which the gentiles were, and, in this respect, were not distinguishable from them.

Unbelieving companions were sanctified legally, in a figurative sense, so that church members might lawfully continue in connection with them; and this is commended to our faith by the consideration that, if it were not so, our children would be unclean, whereas they are known to be holy. That is, if this were not so, our children would have to be reckoned as of the same unsanctified body with the heathen, whereas they are now reckoned as belonging to the church of God, and as being so far the subjects of ceremonial holiness.

There is no other sense in which the children of church members can be accounted holy, except as fit candidates for admission to the Christian church. Their ceremonial holiness, therefore, is an evidence of their title to church membership, and their title

to church membership lays a foundation for their baptism.

§ 60. (2.) Children of church members are called *faithful*. The term *faithful* is a title frequently applied to Christians in the New Testament. It is sometimes improperly translated believers. The following are some of the instances in which it occurs: Acts 16: 1; "The son of a certain woman, who was a Jewess and a *faithful*," that is, a Christian. 2 Cor. 6: 15; "What part hath a *faithful* with an unfaithful." 1 Tim. 5: 16; "If any *faithful* [man] or *faithful* [woman] have widows, let such relieve them." 1 Tim. 4: 12; "Be thou an example to the *faithfuls*, in word, in conversation, in charity, in spirit, in faith, in purity." Eph. 1: 1; "To the *faithfuls* in Christ Jesus."

In the above, and many similar passages of scripture, *faithful* and *faithfuls* denote Christians or church members. Being a title of church members, the application of this term to children by the apostle is an evidence that they were church members.

An application is made of it to children in Titus 1: 6, in describing the qualifications for the office of Presbyter or Bishop. "If any be blameless, the husband of one wife, having *faithful* children."

In what sense is having faithful children a qualification for the office of bishop? It may be taken in the sense of obedient children, as it is said in a parallel passage, 1 Tim. 3: 4, "One that ruleth his own family well, having his children in subjection with all gravity."

It may also refer to children as made Christians, that is, baptized, and thus admitted to the communion of the saints; and this is in agreement with

the general usage of the word in the New Testament.

A similar usage prevailed among the early Christians, as appears from ancient inscriptions. The following are some examples of these: "Cyreacus, a *faithful*, died eight days less than three years old. III Kal. Mar." Muratori. "The mother, Eustasia, places this [stone] in commemoration of her son, Policitanio, a *faithful*, who lived three years." Gruter, No. 8. "Uncia Florentina, a *faithful*, rests here in peace. She lived five years, eight months, and eight days. Muratori."

Paul informs Titus that a Presbyter or bishop must have faithful children. The term faithful is a title of professing Christians in the New Testament, and was applied to denote baptized children by the ancient Christians. Whence we infer, that, in the apostolic direction to Titus, faithful children means baptized children; and that no person was allowed to be made a presbyter or bishop who did not have his children baptized, and bring them up in a religious manner.

Fifth argument in favor of the church-membership of Infants.

§61. It was predicted that Christ, under the Christian dispensation, should regard and treat children as lambs of his flock.

Isa. 40: 11, "He shall feed his flock like a shepherd: he shall gather the lambs with his arm and carry them in his bosom." Christ alludes to this prediction, in John 10: 11–18, and declares, "I am the good shepherd." He also says, alluding to his Jew-

ish disciples, "Other sheep I have, which are not of this fold. Them, also, I must bring; they shall hear my voice, and there shall be one fold and one shepherd."

In the comparison of the church to a sheep-fold, the sheep represent adult Christians, and the lambs their infant children. Taking the lambs with the arm and carrying them in the bosom, denotes taking the children of the church in the arm, and carrying them in the bosom.

If adult converts may, in some cases, not inappropriately be called the lambs of Christ's flock; this does not prove, that children are not equally entitled to be comprehended under that designation. The lambs of Christ's flock, may comprehend adult converts; but they must comprehend the infant children of church-members.

In all periods preceding the establishment of the Christian church, pious adults were regarded as the sheep of Christ's fold, and their children as the lambs. A prediction in regard to the lambs, when these lambs denoted, beyond all question, the children of the saints, must be interpreted agreeably to that usage, as denoting them too.

It is clear then that, under the Christian dispensation, Christ was to take children with his arm, and carry them in his bosom, as the lambs of his flock. This is done by the baptism of children, and their recognition as members of the church of Christ. Where children are not baptized, and not recognized as members of the church of Christ, this is not done. They cannot be taken in the arms of Christ as lambs of his flock, without being recognized as a part of that flock.

The opposers of infant baptism, discard their own children as not being lambs of the flock of Christ, and not being fit to be taken up and cherished as such. How contrary is this to the prediction: "He shall feed his flock like a shepherd. He shall gather the lambs with his arm and carry them in his bosom."

Sixth argument in favor of the Church-membership of Infants.

§62. Eph. 2: 11–12, "Wherefore remember, that ye being in time past Gentiles in the flesh, who are called uncircumcision by that which is called circumcision in the flesh made with hands; that at that time ye were without Christ, being aliens from the commonwealth of Israel and strangers from the covenants of promise, having no hope, and without God in the world. But now in Christ Jesus, ye who sometimes were far off, are made nigh by the blood of Christ."

V. 19. "Now, therefore, ye are no more strangers and foreigners, but fellow citizens with the *saints* and of the household of God."

In the above declaration of the apostle, the commonwealth of Israel, with its covenants of promise, denotes the Jewish church.

Members of the Christian church, are described as being no more strangers and foreigners, but fellow citizens with the saints and of the household of God.

From this it clearly appears that, in the estimation of the apostle, the Jewish commonwealth was, for the time being, the family or church of God, and that

the Christian church is a continuation of this family, so that those who are received into it, are fellow citizens with the saints of the former dispensation.

In being called fellow-citizens, the church is compared to a state. The Jewish and Christian saints are described as fellow citizens, that is, as members of one and the same state. But if the Jewish and Christian churches are one and the same state, so that Christians are fellow citizens with the Jews of the former dispensation, then Judaism and Christianity are, essentially, the same system; and all the essential principles of Judaism, are principles of Christianity. It was one essential principle of Judaism, that children should be included, with their parents, as subjects of religious rites. The same, therefore, is a legitimate principle of Christianity.

The church-membership of children is established by six independent arguments.

§63. Each of these arguments is independent of the others, and each, consequently, must stand or fall by itself. The first three will be easily understood, and their conclusiveness easily perceived by candid readers.

It may be questioned whether the fourth is conclusive. Explanations may be put upon the promises of that argument, which do not require the hypothesis of the church-membership of children. The evidence which they afford, therefore, is of the probable, not of the demonstrative kind. But the probability which they establish is of very considerable strength. It depends upon laws of interpretation which are so general, and upon facts and principles which are so obvious and indisputable, that the conclusion based upon it, particularly with res-

pect to the application of the word holy, falls little short of being certain. That conclusion is not only probable, but probable in the highest degree, and, therefore, if it was unsustained by the three preceding arguments, would be a legitimate principle of action, and a valid reason for admitting children to be members of the Christian church.

It appears on the whole, therefore, that infants, belonging to the families of church-members, are entitled to be admitted to the Christian church. This conclusion is supported by evidence of the most decisive character. There is no counter evidence. There is nothing in the scriptures inconsistent with it. The objection that infants are not mentioned as church-members, and not particularly treated as such in the New Testament, amounts to nothing. God may not have taken our own favorite modes of acquainting us with this feature of Christianity, but he has furnished us with other means of ascertaining it; which, if properly improved, will conduct us to the most certain conclusion on the subject.

The title of infants to church-membership, comprehends their title to Christian baptism, because baptism is the rite of initiation into the church.

Children, therefore, being entitled to church-membership, are entitled to receive baptism, the rite of initiation into the church, and the seal of church-membership.

CHAPTER IX.

ANALOGY OF CHRISTIAN BAPTISM TO CIRCUMCISION.

Second argument in favor of Infant Baptism.

§ 64. Christian baptism is analogous to circumcision.

Nature of Circumcision.

1. Circumcision was, formerly, enjoined upon all the true worshippers of God, with the exception of females, who were incapable of receiving it, as a seal of justification by faith. Hence it is said, Rom. 4: 11, 12, "And he (Abraham,) received the sign of circumcision, a seal of the righteousness of faith, [which he obtained] in uncircumcision, that he might be the father of all them that believe in circumcision, that righteousness might be imputed to them also; and the father of the uncircumcision, not to those of the circumcision only, but to those who walk in the steps of the faith of our father Abraham, which he had in uncircumcision."

The righteousness of faith is the same as justification by faith. Circumcision, therefore, in being to Abraham a seal of the righteousness of faith, was to him a seal of justification by faith. And if it was a seal of justification by faith in the case of Abraham, it was a seal of the same thing in the case of all others to whom it was lawfully applied. Considered as a seal, it did not confirm one thing to

Abraham and another and different thing to others, but sealed one and the same thing to all. It was, therefore, a seal of justification by faith, when applied to infants, as much as when applied to Abraham.

§65. 2. Circumcision was a symbol of moral cleansing. Hence, in Deut. 10: 16, it is said, "Circumcise, therefore, the foreskin of your heart, and be no more stiff-necked. Deut. 30: 6, "And the Lord thy God will circumcise thy heart and the heart of thy seed, to love the Lord thy God with all thy heart and with all thy soul, that thou mayest live."

Jer. 4: 4, "Circumcise yourselves to the Lord and take away the foreskin of your heart, ye men of Judah and inhabitants of Jerusalem." Acts 7: 51, "Ye stiff-necked, and uncircumcised in heart and ears, ye do always resist to Holy Ghost: as your fathers did, so do ye." Rom. 2: 28, 29, "For he is not a Jew, who is one outwardly; neither is that circumcision, which is outward in the flesh. But he is a Jew, who is one inwardly, and circumcision is that of the heart, in the spirit and not in the letter, whose praise is not of men, but of God."

In these passages, the significancy of circumcision as a symbol of moral cleansing, is most clearly set forth. To circumcise the heart means, to cleanse the heart. The cleansing of the heart is, moral cleansing. Circumcision, therefore, is evidently a symbol of moral cleansing.

§66. 3. Circumcision was a rite of initiation into the Patriarchal and Mosaic churches.

When the infant, eight days old, was circumcised, it was initiated into the then existing church of God,

and recognized as a member of that church. So in the case of adults, who were converted to the Abrahamic and Mosaic faith. They were initiated into the ancient church, by circumcision; and circumcision when administered was, in the case of males, a seal of their membership.

§67. 4. Circumcision was a seal of the covenant relations subsisting between God and his people, and in being a seal of those relations, it was a seal of all the blessings promised by God in his covenant with men, and of all the obligations assumed by men in their covenant with God. Hence, circumcision, at the time of its institution, was expressly declared to be a token of the covenant subsisting between God and men. Gen. 17: 11.

The token of a covenánt, as the word is here used, is the same as a seal of a covenant.

The circumcision of Abraham, was a seal of God's covenant with men, as it subsisted between him and Abraham. With others who were circumcised, whether lineal descendants of Abraham or not, it was a seal of God's covenant with men as it subsisted between God and those persons.

§68. In the four particulars which have now been specified, circumcision under the Patriarchal and Mosaic dispensations, answered the same purposes which Christian baptism now answers, and possessed the same significancy which Christian baptism now possesses. These were all the essential purposes of circumcision, and they are all the essential purposes of Christian baptism.

Circumcision was required to be administered to infants and young children on the ground of the

church-membership of their parents. This require ment was insisted upon as of the utmost importance, and might, on no account, be neglected.

In obedience to this law, Abraham circumcised all his male children and servants. In obedience to the same, circumcision continued to be administered to infants, till after the full establishment of the Christian Church. Christian baptism was instituted before circumcision was abolished. Being similar in design and import to circumcision, it must have been administered to the same subjects. There is a propriety in its administration to the same subjects, and in the absence of any specific information, relating to the subjects of Christian baptism, as comprehending or not comprehending infants, we are authorized to infer, from the similarity of Christian baptism to circumcision in design and significancy, that infants were comprehended.

If baptism performs the same office in the Christain church which circumcision performed in the Patriarchal and Mosaic churches, the natural inference is, that it ought to be administered to the same subjects, and on the same conditions. In the absence of any specific information, limiting the subjects of Christian baptism to adults, the inference, from its resemblance to circumcision, that it ought to be extended to infants, and was extended to them, becomes most clear and certain.

If infants were fit subjects of circumcision formerly, they are fit subjects of baptism now. If there was a propriety in their being circumcised formerly, there is a propriety in their being baptized now. Infant nature has not altered since the days of Abraham. The essential conditions, liabilities and capacities of infant children, are the same as formerly.

Their privileges ought not, therefore, to be abridged. No higher qualifications are required for baptism, than were formerly required for circumcision. Infants had all the requisite qualifications for circumcision; therefore, they have all the requisite qualifications for baptism.

§69. The analogy of Christian baptism to circumcision was believed and taught by the early Christian fathers. Justin Martyr, converted 132, A. D., and beheaded 164, A. D., writes thus: "We Gentile Christians also, who by him, (Christ,) have access to God, have not received that circumcision according to the flesh, but that circumcision which is spiritual; and moreover, for indeed we were sinners, we have received this circumcision in baptism, for the purpose of God's mercy, and it is enjoined on all to receive it in like manner."

Chrysostom says: "There was pain and trouble in Jewish circumcision, but our circumcision, I mean the grace of baptism, gives cure without pain; and this for infants as well as men." Hom. on Gen. 40.

Hence, also, Fidus, 250, A. D., hesitated to baptise infants before they were eight days old and thought that the Jewish law respecting circumcising children at eight days of age ought to be observed in respect to the baptism of infants.

§70. I have thought proper to base the argument from circumcision, in favor of infant baptism upon the analogy of baptism to circumcision. Some have chosen to base it on a substitution of Christian baptism for circumcision. The reasoning will then stand thus.

Christian baptism is substituted for circumcision, as a seal of covenant relations to God, and of church

membership. Circumcision was administered to infants belonging to pious families; therefore, Christian baptism ought to be administered to infants in like circumstances.

The conclusion of this argument is a legitimate deduction from the premises, and if the entire argument is in any respect defective, that defect must pertain to the promise in which it is asserted, that Christian baptism is substituted for circumcision.

It is denied by some, that Christian baptism is substituted for circumcision, on the ground that this rite was instituted before circumcision was abrogated.—How, says the objector, can one ordinance be substituted for another, when it is instituted before that other is abrogated? As long as circumcision continued to be in use, no co-existing rite could be a substitute for it. This objection is valid only for the time which followed the institution of Christian baptism, and preceded the abrogation of circumcision. Two ordinances of similar import and design, established at different times, may be observed together for an indefinite period, and then the one last adopted may supplant the other, and become a legitimate substitute for it.

So it was with circumcision and baptism. They were instituted at different times, and were ordinances of similar import and design. For a few years they were observed together, but after a while circumcision was abrogated, and Christian baptism thenceforward was used alone for the same purposes as before, and for the same purposes essentially for which circumcision had been used from the days of Abraham till the conversion of Cornelius.

Considered as a rite of initiation into the church of God, and as a seal of covenant relations and obli-

gations between God and man; therefore Christian baptism is a substitute for Christian circumcision. It became so at the time when circumcision was abrogated. Previous to that time, it was a concomitant seal, used for the same purposes essentially as circumcision, but serving to distinguish the Christian Jew from the unchristian Jew. This use of Christian baptism arose from the fact that the Jewish church had, to a considerable extent, abandoned the legitimate principles of Judaism, and that it became expedient to separate the spiritual Jews from the unspiritual, or the true Jews from the false.

The substitution of Christian baptism for circumcision considered as a seal of covenant relations and obligations, is extremely obvious. At first, circumcision was practiced alone as a seal of the covenant subsisting between God and man. Then from the commencement of the public ministry of Christ, till the conversion of Cornelius, they were practiced together as joint seals of this covenant; and after the conversion of Cornelius, Christian baptism was practiced alone as a seal of the same covenant.

God's gracious covenant with man was one permanent arrangement entered into and sealed at the time of Abraham. This arrangement still exists, with baptism substituted for circumcision; that is, with circumcision its first seal abrogated, and baptism substituted in its place.

CHAPTER X.

PERPETUITY OF THE ABRAHAMIC COVENANT.

Third argument in favor of Infant Baptism.

§71. The Abrahamic covenant continues in full force. God appeared to Abraham and granted him on several occasions great and precious promises.—These promises were renewed, and the relations of God to Abraham were reduced to the form of a solemn religious covenant on the occasion referred to in Gen. 17. This covenant consists of certain promises and requirements, to which Abraham gives his assent, by submitting to a religious rite affixed as a seal of the arrangement.

The promises are briefly comprehended in this; v. 7. "I will establish my covenant between me and thee, and thy seed after thee, in their generations, for an everlasting covenant; to be a God to thee and to thy seed after thee."

Other promises and specifications may all be considered as comprehended in this. That God should be a God to us and to our descendants after us, is all that we need, and all that we can desire. This is the tenor of the covenant with Abraham. The leading terms of this covenant are suited to the condition of mankind in all ages and countries. Some specifications were added which pertain to the particular descendants of Abraham, and to their destination under the former dispensation. But in respect to its spiritual provisions, and in respect to temporal bless-

ings generally, it is equally suited to the condition of all men, at all times, and under all dispensations of grace.

This covenant was the basis of the Mosaic dispensation. When the Mosaic rites were disused it remained unrevoked.

The Mosaic rites were no part of the Abrahamic covenant.

Paul puts forth an elaborate argument in favor of this position, in the third chapter of Galatians. He informs us that they who are of faith are the children of Abraham; v. 7. That Christ has redeemed us from the curse of the law; that the blessing of Abraham might come on the gentiles through Jesus Christ; v. 13, 14. That this covenant was not disannulled or superseded by the law; v. 17. That we are all the children of God by faith in Jesus Christ; v. 26; and that, if we are Christ's, then we are Abraham's seed and heirs, according to the promise; v. 29.

A more explicit evidence of the perpetuity of the Abrahamic covenant could not be given. Not only an apostolic assertion, but an apostolic argument is put on record in its support.

Here then we have a perpetual covenant in accordance with which God dispenses blessings to mankind. This covenant was esteemed infinitely precious in former times. It is still precious in the view of all who properly understand it.

At the time of its establishment, it was a sealed arrangement. Circumcision was its seal. This seal continued till after the commencement of the Christian dispensation.

§ 72. Seals are liable to be altered, and are often altered for good and sufficient reasons. After the seal of circumcision had been in use more than 1,900 years, God saw fit to abrogate it, together with the Mosaic rites of religious worship.

Its abrogation did not take place till several years after the crucifixion. The first indication which the apostles received of its abrogation, was in A. D. 41, in connection with the conversion of Cornelius, the Roman Centurion. Peter was called upon to associate with Cornelius and his friends, on terms which were entirely inconsistent with established Jewish usages. Cornelius and his gentile friends appear to have been baptized and admitted to the Christian church without circumcision, and were the first uncircumcised converts of whom we have any account.

Here then, for the first time, the ancient seal of the Abrahamic covenant was omitted by divine authority. The omission of it, however, did not pass without notice.

On his return to Jerusalem, Peter was called to account for his violation of the established and hitherto sacred usages of the Jews, in reference to Cornelius and his friends. He explains the whole matter, showing that he had done nothing of himself, but had acted under the authority and special direction of God. His statements were satisfactory. They showed the disciples generally what Peter then, for the first time, understood, that the Mosaic rites, together with circumcision, the ancient seal of the Abrahamic covenant, were no longer valid and no longer obligatory. Acts 11: 1–18.

So strong, however, was the attachment of the Jewish Christians to the Mosaic rites, that the subject was brought up again in a council of the elders

and apostles, held at Jerusalem, A. D. 49; eight years subsequent to the time when Cornelius was converted.

After a full discussion of the subject in this council, the disuse of the Mosaic rites and circumcision was unanimously agreed to, as being in conformity with the will of God. The grounds on which the decision was made, were the divine communications made directly and indirectly to Peter, on the occasion of his preaching the gospel to Cornelius, the authority and practice of Paul and Barnabas, and prophecies relating to the subject, which were recited and expounded by James, President of the Council. Acts 15: 1–29.

In this manner, circumcision and the Mosaic rites of religious worship, comprehending the observance of the seventh day of the week as a sabbath, were formally abrogated.

The Abrahamic covenant, agreeably to the reasonings of Paul, already adduced, remained in full force. All the great principles of the former dispensation remained.

§ 73. The reasons for the great change now referred to are, no where in the scriptures, particularly explained. It is not the manner of God; neither does it suit the dignity of the Divine Majesty to go unnecessarily into explanations of the reasons of his procedure. It is proper for us humbly to investigate these reasons as far as they may appear, and reverently to wait for illumination where they do not appear.

Several reasons, however, are obvious, showing a propriety both in the discontinuance of circumcision and the Mosaic rites.

The antitype of the Patriarchal and Mosaic sacrifices having come and performed his appropriate work, it was fit that there should be a change in those institutions, corresponding with the altered light in which their antitype was henceforth to be viewed. This accounts for the disuse of sacrifices. Other Jewish typical ceremonies were intimately associated with these, and naturally stood or fell with them.

The Abrahamic covenant too, had, in addition to its general provisions, adapted to all times, its Jewish peculiarities, which had now received their accomplishment. An alteration of its seal corresponds to the renewed form which that covenant henceforth assumed, and marked a new era in its administration.

But the main reason that appears for the disuse of the Mosaic rites and of circumcision, was, that the unreformed Jewish branch of the church was rejected from being any longer a part of the true church; and it was desirable that the reformed branch of it which had embraced Christianity should be reorganized in a different form, in order to indicate this fact.

§ 74. But though altered in form, the Christian church embraces the true seed of Abraham, and is built on the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ himself being the chief corner stone. Hence Peter says, in connection with the injunction to repent and be baptized for the remission of sins, and the assurance that those who did so should receive the Holy Spirit, Acts 2: 39; "For the promise is to you and to your children, and to all that are afar off, even as many as the Lord our God shall call."

The Abrahamic covenant, still remaining in force in respect to its main provisions, it ought to have a seal. If the old seal is disused, it ought to have a

new one, to be applied like the old. There is the same demand now for a seal to this covenant as formerly. The seal was formerly applied to believing adults and their children. The renewed seal ought, therefore, to be so applied. Is there any such seal? Or has God abrogated the old seal and given us none in its place? If he has given us a new seal, to take the place of circumcision, the old one, what is it? I answer, it is baptism. Baptism signifies what circumcision signified, and seals what circumcision sealed. It seals men as the servants of God. Baptism, therefore, occupies, in the Christian dispensation, the place formerly occupied by circumcision, in the Patriarchal and Mosaic dispensations. It is, therefore, suitable to serve as a seal of the Abrahamic covenant in its renewed form; and in the absence of any other seal, must be presumed to be that seal.

We are not left, however, to inference and analogy on this subject. We have explicit scriptural testimony to establish this point.

Col. 2: 11, 12. "In whom also ye are circumcised with the circumcision made without hands, by putting off the sins of the carnal body, by the circumcision of Christ, being buried with him by baptism." Baptism is here called the circumcision of Christ, or Christian circumcision. This must mean that baptism is now what circumcision was formerly. It cannot mean any thing else. It is, therefore, a direct scriptural evidence, that baptism is a seal of the same covenant now, of which circumcision was the seal formerly.

§75. The perpetuity of the Abrahamic covenant, as a fundamental law of the Christian dispensation, may be proved by an independent argument from

Acts 2: 38, 39. "Then Peter said to them, repent and be baptized, every one of you, to the name of Jesus Christ, for the remission of sins; and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost. For the promise is to you and to your children, and to all that are afar off; even as many as the Lord our God shall call."

The promise here spoken of must relate to the bestowment of the blessings mentioned in the preceding verse. These are comprehended under the titles of remission of sins and the gift of the Holy Ghost. The promise, therefore, must relate to the remission of sins, and the sanctifying influences of the Holy Ghost; or, in other words, to bestowing salvation in the gospel dispensation.

Thus interpreted, the doctrine of this passage is, that in the gospel dispensation, salvation is offered to us and our children. This doctrine is proposed as a reason for repenting and being baptized. Repent and be baptized says the apostle, because salvation is promised to you, and to your children on these conditions. The mention of children in this connection is remarkable, and deserves to be well considered. It is the more worthy of consideration on account of its occurring in the first gospel sermon which was delivered after the resurrection.

Soon after this, we have an account of another discourse by the same apostle, and in it a passage similar to that above mentioned. Acts 3: 19, 20; "Repent ye, therefore, and be converted, that your sins may be blotted out, when the times of refreshing shall come from the presence of the Lord; and he shall send Jesus Christ, who before was preached to you." V. 25; "Ye are the children of the prophets, and of the covenant which God made with our fathers, saying to Abraham, and in thy seed shall all

the kindreds of the earth be blessed." Children of the prophets may mean descendants of the prophets, or disciples of the prophets. The language was applicable to the Jews in both senses. They were, to some extent, the descendants of the prophets, and were generally their disciples.

Children of the covenant made with their fathers, means heirs of that covenant. The covenant made with their fathers embraced the promise of the Messiah, and other spiritual blessings. Their title to the blessings promised in that covenant is assigned as a reason why they should repent and become Christians. One of the most important provisions of the covenant referred to was, that God would be a God to his servants, and to their children after them. Gen. 17: 7.

Here then, in the preaching of the gospel on the day of Pentecost, when many of the hearers were foreigners and ignorant of Christian principles, (Acts 2: 9-11,) and on a subsequent occasion, not far from the same time, we have, first, the annunciation that the promise of salvation, under the Messiah, is to us and our children; and secondly, an appeal made to the Jews as heirs of the covenant made by God with the patriarchs of the former dispensation; both assigned as reasons for repenting and becoming Christians.

The promise of spiritual blessings *in being* to us and our children, is essentially the same as in the Abrahamic covenant, in which it is said: Gen. 17: 7. "I will establish my covenant between me and thee, and thy seed after thee, in their generations; to be a God to thee and to thy seed after thee." The promise of spiritual blessings in the Abrahamic covenant to them and their children after them, was the ground

of infant circumcision. The similar promise of spiritual blessings to us and our children, under the gospel dispensation, is an equally substantial ground for infant baptism.

Under the former dispensations, spiritual blessings were dispensed to parents and their children, and in conformity to this arrangement, circumcision, the seal of God's covenant, was applied to the children of God's people. Under the Christian dispensation, the promise is, that spiritual blessings shall be dispensed to parents and their children, just as formerly.—Hence, baptism, the seal of covenant or promised spiritual blessings, ought to be applied to the children of God's people, as much as to adult converts.

God's promises in respect to spiritual blessings, are his covenant, or his part of the covenant subsisting between him and his people. God's covenant, therefore, so far as children are concerned, is the same as it was formerly. It embraces all adult Christians and their children.

The continuance of the Abrahamic covenant, requires a joint participation of children with their parents in Christian baptism, the seal of covenant relations to God.

CHAPTER XI.

DESIGNATING THE SUBJECTS OF CHRISTIAN BAPTISM BY GENERAL TERMS.

Fourth argument in favor of Infant Baptism.

§76. The terms which describe the subjects of Christian baptism in the scriptures comprehend infants.

This is the case in respect to John's baptism.—It is said, Matt. 3: 5, 6, that "all Jerusalem and all Judea and all the country round about Jordan went out to him and were baptized by him at Jordan;" and in Mark 1: 5, that "all the land of Judea, and they of Jerusalem, were baptized by him at the river Jordan, confessing their sins."

The terms here made use of to describe the subjects of John's baptism, are of the most comprehensive kind. All of a people include infants equally with adults.

The declaration that they were baptized, confessing their sins, does not militate against the idea that infants were included among them. Because, if confession of sins was made generally by adults, the language made use of by the evangelist would be perfectly appropriate, though infants made no confession.

The question whether infants were baptized by John, is a question of interpretation. The appropriate answer to it depends on the right interpretation of the terms denoting the subjects of his baptism in the passages of scripture above referred to.

Unless some restriction is put upon those terms, they must be interpreted as comprehending infants. If they are to be restricted, on what grounds is this restriction to be made? We may not restrict the meaning of general terms without reason. Shall these terms be restricted to adults on the ground that infants are not fit subjects of baptism? That assumption is false. Baptism was applied to infants from the days of Moses to those of John, and the fitness of infants to receive it does not appear ever to have been questioned. It is too late, therefore. to assume it now. If infants were fit subjects of baptism, we infer, that they were comprehended under the terms made use of by the evangelist to describe the subjects of John's baptism; and consequently, that they participated with their parents in the reception of that ordinance.

If John's baptism included infants among its subjects, Christian baptism must have done the same.—For they appear to have been kindred institutions.

§77. Matt. 28: 19, contains the injunction, "teach all nations, baptizing them to the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost." The word them, in this passage, which denotes the subjects of baptism, stands for all nations. All nations, therefore, are to be baptized. This term always includes infants, unless there is some obvious reason for excepting them, either in the predicate or in the context.

The nature of baptism presents no reason for excepting infants, for it was common to baptize them; and the laws of God had required such baptism for nearly two thousand years. The context furnishes no evidence of their being excepted; therefore, we are authorised to infer that the apostolic commission

to baptize, required them to baptize the infants of believing adults equally with their parents.

Mark 16: 16, in which it is declared that "he that believeth and is baptized, shall be saved; and he that believeth not shall be damned," proves nothing against the interpretation of Matt. 28: 19 as enjoining the baptism of infants.

In respect to adult persons, faith ought to precede being baptized. He that believeth and is baptized, is the natural mode of referring to faith and baptism, on the supposition that infants were baptized. It therefore proves nothing against that supposition.—In order to prove any thing against that supposition, it ought to be incompatible with it.

§78. In Acts 16: 14, 15, it is said that "a certain woman named Lydia, a seller of purple, of the city of Thyatira, who worshiped God, heard [the gospel] whose heart the Lord opened, that she attended to the things which were spoken by Paul. And when she was baptized, and her household, she besought us, saying, if ye have judged me to be faithful to the Lord, come into my house and abide there: and she constrained us."

We are here told that Lydia heard the gospel preached; that the Lord opened her heart so that she attended to the things spoken by Paul; and then that she was baptized and her household, or family. It does not appear that her family heard the gospel, or believed, but that they were baptized on her account. If this family contained infants, they must have been baptized, and baptized on Lydia's account. The word translated family in its ordinary and proper meaning comprehends infants. Unless restricted to adults, it must comprehend them here. No such re-

striction is required by the nature of the ordinance of baptism, or by the context; therefore, none is to be assumed.

§79. In Acts 16: 32, 33, it is said that Paul and Silas spake the word of the Lord to the Philippian jailer and to all that were in his house. "And he (the jailer,) took them the same hour of the night, and washed their stripes and was baptized, he and all his, straightway."

After the word his, near the close of this passage, family is to be supplied. It appears, therefore, that the jailer was baptized and all his family. Whether there were infants in his family or not, is not specified. The word family, naturally comprehends infants, and we have a right to infer that it is to be interpreted as comprehending them here, unless they are excluded by the nature of the predicate baptized, or by the context. The nature of baptism does not exclude them. The context does not exclude them. An attempt has sometimes been made to exclude them by the context because it is said that the apostle spake the word to all that were in the jailer's house, and that the jailer rejoiced, believing in God with all his family.

These modes of expression imply that there were adult persons in his family besides himself, to whom the word was preached, and that these believed.—But they imply nothing against the supposition, that his family comprehended infants too.

§80. In 1. Cor. 1: 16, Paul says, "I baptized the family of Stephanas." Of what persons or what description of persons this family consisted, we are not informed. The term family is of sufficient compre-

hension to embrace infants, and does naturally and usually embrace them.

Family, with us, is used to denote children, either inclusive or exclusive of one or both of their parents. Thus we speak of a man who has children, as having a family, and one who has no children, as having no family. When a widow is left with several children, we speak of her as being left with a large family. So persons are spoken of as subjects of family sickness, when sickness relating to children is intended.

A similar usage prevails in the scriptures, 1 Tim. 3: 4; "One that ruleth his own *family* well, having his children in subjection with all gravity." V. 12; "Let the deacons be the husbands of one wife, ruling their children and their own families well." 5: 14; "I will, therefore, that the younger women marry, bear children, guide the family."

The term family, in each of the above passages, denotes chiefly children. This is the term made use of to describe the subjects of Christian baptism, in several passages in the New Testament. Lydia and her family, therefore, means Lydia and her children. The jailer at Philippi, and his family, means the jailer and his children; and the family of Stephanas means the children of Stephanas. In these three cases, it is expressly said, that the families of particular persons were baptized.

In Acts 11: 13, 14, the family of Cornelius is mentioned separately from himself, as to participate with him in salvation. "Whereby thou and all thy *family* shall be saved." Cornelius and all his family were to be saved by means of the preaching of Peter.

In Acts 18: 8, we are informed that "Crispus, the chief ruler of the Synagogue, believed in the Lord

with all his family; and many of the Corinthians, hearing, believed and were baptized."

The families of Cornelius and Crispus mean, chiefly, the children of those persons. Their ages are not specified. Some were probably of sufficient age to become believers and be baptized on account of their faith; others, for aught that appears, may have been infants, which, if baptized at all, must have been received as infant saints, or faithfuls, and not as adult believers.

§81. The only account which we have of the subjects of Christian baptism in the scriptures, is expressed in general terms, such as have been cited above. If baptism was not to be restricted to persons of any age, the use of these terms is an appropriate and sufficiently distinct and perspicuous description of its subjects. But on the supposition that it was to be restricted to adults, the terms descriptive of its subjects in the scriptures are not as specific as they should be, in order to withhold us from error.

The scriptures describe the subjects of baptism by the use of terms which include infants equally with adults. There is no specific restriction of these terms to adults, in any single case. Therefore, they ought not to be restricted. If we restrict them we do it on our own responsibility, and contrary to the well established laws of interpretation, as they relate to all languages both ancient and modern.

CHAPTER XII.

THE ABSENCE OF ANY EXCLUSION OF INFANTS FROM CHRISTIAN BAPTISM.

Fifth argument in favor of Infant Baptism.

§ 82. The scriptures do not, in any instance, exclude infants from a participation with their parents in Christian baptism.

In some cases, not to exclude persons from particular privileges, is the same as to include them among the subjects of such privileges. This is believed to have been the case with respect to infants, considered in relation to Christian baptism. Christian baptism was introduced in the Mosaic church; Christianity produced a schism in that church; and Christian baptism was, from the commencement of our Lord's public ministry, administered to all his disciples and followers. The Christian part of the Jewish church formed one division, and the anti-Christian part another.

In respect to ceremonial institutions, till some years after the death of Christ, both divisions were similar. The Christian division practiced all the Mosaic rites equally with the other. Among these were circumcision and the Mosaic baptisms. But, in addition to the Mosaic rites, they also practiced Christian baptism, as a rite of initiation to their ecclesiastical body, and a seal of discipleship to Christ.

An account of the origin of this schism, of the organization of the followers of Christ into a separate body, and of the initiation of members to this body by baptism, is related by the evangelists, without stating whether infants were initiated with their parents, and on the ground of their parents' faith or not. Whether they were thus initiated or not, is left to be inferred. One or the other inference we are required to draw. From the silence of the inspired historians respecting them, we must either infer that infants were admitted to the Christian division of the Jewish church, with their parents, and on their parents' account, and baptized, or else, that they were rejected and left unbaptized.

We infer that they were admitted, because it was in conformity to the usages of the church within which the Christian church was formed, to practice such admissions. If this usage had been departed from in the organization of the Christian church, it ought to have been specified in the evangelical history. But there is no such specification. The whole subject is passed over by the Evangelists in perfect silence.

We are not authorized to suppose the Christian division of the Jewish church, at its first organization, to have differed from the other in any points not specified. There is no specification of a difference in this point; therefore, no difference can be legitimately inferred. It is a confirmation of this argument that the reception or rejection of infants was a subject of very great consequence, and pertaining to the fundamental principles of church organization. If the history of the introduction of baptism, therefore, is so written, that the baptism of infants can be legitimately inferred from it, we are fully authorized

to believe that they were baptized, and that the evangelical history was designed to teach this.

The baptism of infants was not only according to Jewish usage in respect to circumcision, but it was conformable to it in respect to all the Mosaic and traditionary baptisms. This usage, in respect to infants, was not only of divine authority, but was most peremptorily enforced. God had not only commanded it, but he had enforced it as an indispensable and essential part of those religious ordinances which he had seen fit to institute for the benefit of men.

CHAPTER XIII.

PROVISION FOR THE EARLY CONVERSION OF CHILDREN.

Sixth argument in favor of Infant Baptism.

§ 83. God has made provision for the early conversion and the salvation of children, generally.

So far as the atonement is concerned, provision is made for the salvation of all mankind. But children may be brought to avail themselves of it. Hence it is said, in Gen. 18: 19, "I know him [Abraham,] that he will command his children, and his household after him, and they shall keep the way of the Lord, to do justice and judgment; that the Lord may bring

upon Abraham that which he hath spoken of him." Here the effect of Abraham's commanding his children and family, is said to be, that they should keep the way of the Lord, to do justice and judgment. This comprehends their becoming truly pious.

Solomon says, Prov. 22: 6, "Train up a child in the way he should go, and when he is old he will not depart from it." Paul directs, Eph. 6: 4, that we should bring up our children in the nurture and admonition of the Lord.

These passages of scripture, and others, clearly imply that children may and ought to be brought up to be pious. If it is not possible to train up children in the way they should go, what is the propriety of the injunction that we should do this? What is the propriety of the apostolic injunction to bring them up in the nurture and admonition of the Lord? It is possible, then, to train up children, and educate them to be truly pious. This possibility exists in respect to all children, as far as means are provided for the purpose.

In respect to the children of the church, each parent separately, and the church as a body, are charged with the responsibility of doing this.

Just as far as this duty is faithfully performed, we see the children of the church converted in childhood. The main hope of the world for the triumph of Christianity depends not on the conversion of adults by missionary and other evangelical labors, but on the conversion of the children of the church. Others can be reached with difficulty. The children of the church are under its entire control. Adults come into the church subject to many inevitable disadvantages from previous sins, and sinful habits and associations. Children, brought in from their infan-

cy, are not subject to these disadvantages. They are more valuable to the church than others after conversion, in proportion to the earliness of their conversion.

Parental influence and other educational influences, determine the character of children generally. When these influences are in favor of idolatry, children grow up to be idolaters; when they are in favor of Islamism, children grow up to be Mahomedans; when they are in favor of the Papal religion, children grow up to be papists; when they are in favor of the different denominations of protestants, children grow up to be of those different denominations.

The conversion of parents, therefore, usually secures the children also. It ought uniformly to do this.

The consecration of children to God by circumcision, was in beautiful accordance with the doctrine of responsibility of parents for the piety of their children. God virtually said to the pious Jew, "It belongs to you to form, directly or indirectly, the character of your children. You can form their characters for heaven or hell. I require you to form their characters for heaven. I claim them at your hand, and put upon them the mark and seal of my servants on your responsibility. Do your duty to them, that when they come to years of discretion, they may know and serve me." He says the same to the pious Christian in the ordinance of infant baptism.

If Christian parents, and the church within whose fold children are born, are responsible for the piety of their children, and if God holds them responsible for this result, how appropriate is it that they should be baptized on the ground of their parents faith!

Their hope is in this. Their prospective piety and salvation depend upon this. Well, therefore, may they be baptized on the ground of this faith!

CHAPTER XIV.

TESTIMONY OF THE EARLY CHRISTIAN FATHERS.

Sixth argument in favor of Infant Baptism.

§84. The early Christian fathers bear testimony in favor of infant baptism.

Tertullian.

1. The earliest explicit testimony of the Christian fathers, in respect to the subjects of baptism, is given by Tertullian. Tertullian was born at Carthage, about 150, A. D., and died in 220, A. D. The time of his conversion is uncertain. He received a liberal education, and was well versed in Greek and Roman literature, and Roman law. Towards the latter part of his life, he left the orthodox church and joined the Montanists. The ground of his separation from the orthodox church, related chiefly to discipline in regard to which he was inclined to be excessively austere.

The Montanists claimed superior perfection; were generally strict in the observance of external rites, and placed great dependence upon them. Montanus, the founder of this sect, claimed to be the *Comforter*, and undertook to perfect the Christian system.

In conformity with his extravagant views as a Montanist, Tertullian discountenances the baptism of infants, on the following grounds:

1. That their sponsors may not incur danger;
2. That they may first learn the design of baptism;
3. Because their innocent age does not require forgiveness of sins.

With equal positiveness, he discountenances adult baptisms in the case of unmarried persons, and those who have lost their partners on account of the exposure of such to temptation.

Tertullian does not state explicitely what the usages of the orthodox church in his time, respecting the baptism of infants were. But he gives his opinion as to what they ought to be, and assigns his reasons for that opinion.

He puts the baptism of infants on a par with that of unmarried persons, and argues against both with equal positiveness, and on similar grounds. His argument against the baptism of infants, is a decisive evidence of the practice of infant baptism in his time.

It is also an evidence that he had no good reason to find fault with this practice. For he may safely be presumed to have adduced against it the best reasons he had. It would have been much to his purpose to have said that infant baptism was not of apostolic origin, that it was an innovation upon apostolic usages, and unauthorised by the scriptures.—But he says none of these things.

The prevalence of infant baptism may be inferred from the objections made to it by Tertullian, and its apostolic authority from the frivolous nature of the objections which he alleges against it. Being a man of learning, he must have known whether the baptism of infants had been handed down from the times of the apostles or not, and his neglect to object against this usage, the want of apostolic authority, proves that there was no ground for such an objection.

Origen.

§85. Origen was born at Alexandria 185, A. D., and early instructed by his father in the sciences and in the Christian religion. At the age of 18, he became principal of the catechetical school in Alexandria; and his lectures were attended by multitudes of both sexes. In 211, he went to Rome, where he gained many friends. He was early advanced to the office of presbyter, and preached the gospel with distinguished honor and success in different important places in Palestine and Arabia. He died at Tyre, in consequence of persecutions which he endured under the Emperor Decius in 254, A. D.—His writings were numerous and valuable.

The following are among his testimonies concerning the subjects of baptism.

Homily 8, on Leviticus c. 12. "According to the usage of the church baptism is given to infants when if there were nothing in infants which needed forgiveness and mercy, the grace of baptism would be evidently superfluous."

Homily on Luke 14: "Infants are baptized for the forgiveness of sins. Of what sins? or at what

time have they sinned? or how is it possible that any cause for the laver should exist in respect to infants, except according to that sentiment which we have expressed a little before; that no one is free from defilement even if his life has been but of a single day upon earth. And because, by the sacrament of baptism, native defilement is taken away, therefore even infants are baptized."

Commentary on the Epistle to the Romans, book 5. "For this cause it was that the church received a tradition from the apostles to give baptism even to infants."

The above passages are taken from parts of Origen's works, which have not been preserved in the original Greek. They are, however, preserved in ancient translations, which are entitled to the highest confidence.

They teach explicitly two things:

1. That baptism was generally applied to infants in the times of Origen on their parents' account;

2. That this usage was believed to have been handed down from the apostles.

The extensive learning and travels of Origen, and his great abilities and opportunities of information render it morally impossible, that he should have been mistaken on this subject.

Cyprian.

§86. Cyprian was born about 200, A. D., at Carthage, and was descended from a respectable family. He was converted to Christianity in 246. Soon after this, he was made a Presbyter; and in 248, A. D., was made bishop of the church of Carthage. He

was beheaded September 14, 258, A. D., for preaching the gospel in the gardens near Carthage, contrary to the decrees of the civil authority.

In 253, A. D., Cyprian presided in a council composed of sixty six bishops. In a letter still extant, he communicates to an absent bishop the decision of the council on a question respecting infant baptism, in the following words:

"But as far as relates to the case of infants, who you said ought not to be presented to be baptized, within the second or third day after they are born, and that the law of ancient circumcision ought to be considered; so that you supposed that no one ought to be baptized and sanctified within the eighth day after he was born, it seemed far otherwise to all in our council. In this which you thought ought to be done, no one agreed, but we all rather judged that the mercy and favor of God ought to be denied to no human being. And, therefore, dearest brother, this was our opinion in council, that no person ought by us to be prohibited from baptism and from the grace of God, who is benignant and kind to all.—But when this ought to be observed towards all; we supposed that it ought more especially to be observed towards infants and persons recently born."

The above testimony is decisive in respect to the prevalence of infant baptism in those times; and its supposed scriptural authority.

§87. Gregory Nazianzen, Ambrose Chrysostom and Augustine, have given us equally explicit testimonies in favor of the prevalence of infant baptism in their times; and in some cases, have referred to it as corresponding to the infant circumcision of the former dispensation.

Augustine declares explicitly the universality of infant baptism in the Christian church, and asserts the apostolic authority of this usage.

While the above and similar testimonies assure us of the prevalence of the baptism of infants, no evidence of any kind has come down to us of the exclusion of infants from this rite in any branch of the Christian church which did not discard all baptism. Some sects are mentioned by ancient writers who practiced no baptism at all, in this respect, like the Quakers of modern times. But those who baptized at all, baptized infants. At last this was generally the case, and no evidence whatever has come down to us to prove that it was not universally so.

§ 88. The testimony of the early Christian fathers is entitled to full credit, as to the fact of the prevalence of infant baptism in their times. It is also of great weight in favor of the apostolic origin of infant baptism. For they had means of investigating this subject historically, which later ages do not possess, and can never attain. They had access to vast stores of information which have since perished. Hundreds of churches had existed in unbroken lines of succession from the times of the apostles, and the records of many of them, from their commencement, had doubtless been preserved. A reference to them was all that was necessary to ascertain what the apostolic usage was. Such reference could easily be made, and doubtless was made by the very persons whose testimonies have been adduced and referred to.

The general prevalence of infant baptism at the early period above referred to, cannot be satisfactorily accounted for on the supposition that it was not

of apostolic origin. The exclusion of infants from baptism, if they were excluded, depended upon no provincialism, which, according to Jewish usage, taught that infants were not to be baptised; and according to classic usage taught that they were to be baptised. The only causes that can be assigned for the introduction of infant baptism after the days of the apostles and previous to the times of Tertullian and Origen, are the apparent fitness of baptism to be administered to infants, the supposed good to be attained by it, the analogy of baptism to circumcision, and other considerations of this kind. These considerations must all have been met by the apostles, had they discarded the baptism of infants, and overcome; and in overcoming them, they must have laid a firm foundation for the exclusion of infants from baptism. But where was this foundation laid? Not in the New Testament. Not in any documents which continued till the times of Origen and Cyprian. Where, then, did they lay it? I answer nowhere. No such foundation was laid. If it had been laid, it would still be capable of being found. Some vestige of it at least would be discoverable.

CHAPTER XV.

THE BLESSING OF GOD ON INFANT BAPTISM.

§89. When the blessing of God signally attends the observance of any religious institution, it is an evidence of the propriety of that institution, and of its agreement with the will of God. It is not to be supposed, that God will signally bless institutions which are not conformable to his will, or that he will make such institutions, channels of his mercy and grace. God's appointed institutions are, the channels of his mercy. In them, his blessings flow. In this way, he honors his own appointments. By this means, he makes an obvious and important difference between them and the institutions of men.

The sabbath, prayer, and public religious worship, may be referred to, in proof of the fact, that God distinguishes his own institutions by his blessing. God's blessing signally accompanies the observance of the sabbath, it signally accompanies prayer and public worship; so much so, that if all other evidence of the divine authority of these institutions, should be suddenly annihilated, this, unaided and alone, would be sufficient for their establishment. The usefulness of the sabbath, the usefulness of prayer, the usefulness of public worship, would cause them forever to be observed, as sacred and indispensable duties, if all other evidences in their favor were lost. This usefulness, is the effect of God's blessing, and is a continually renewed testimony of his will in regard to moral actions.

The baptism of infants, with a recognition of them as lambs of the fold of Christ, has been marked with the most signal demonstrations of God's favor. It has been blessed, in a high degree, to parents, as a means of quickening them in the discharge of their parental duties, pertaining to the moral government and religious instruction of their children, and as a means of affording them consolation under the removal of their children by death. It has been blessed, in a high degree, to children, in early impressing their minds with a sense of the obligations impressed upon them by the baptismal seal and covenant, and in early leading them to the Savior.

In the Episcopal church, where the baptism and church relations of infants are more respected, perhaps, than in any other of the Protestant churches, especially by the most evangelical portions of that church, the infant membership is the main source for the supply and multiplication of adult members. The numerous confirmations, which occur in the families of pious Episcopalians, are so many testimonies of the excellence of Episcopal principles and practice on this subject. They are so many divine testimonies, that infant church-membership and infant baptism, are in agreement with the will of God.

But the Presbyterian church, though far behind the most spiritual portions of the Episcopal in a due appreciation of infant church-membership and infant baptism, has ample experience of the benefits resulting from this feature of its system, as far as it is legitimate preserved and carried out, in the practice of its congregations and members.

CHAPTER XVI.

CONCLUSION IN FAVOR OF THE BAPTISM OF INFANTS.

§ 90. The conclusion, from the foregoing arguments, is clear and strong in favor of the baptism of infants. That conclusion is not merely probable. It is certain. The evidence adduced, is incompatible with the contrary hypothesis. But even if it was only probable, and probable in a high degree, that probability, in the absence of any thing more decisive, would be a legitimate rule of action to the church of God. It would be the indispensable duty of the church to extend Christian baptism to its infants, even if it was only probable that Christ and the apostles did so. Where certain conclusions can be attained, we ought not to stop short of attaining them; and are to blame if we do so.

But where certainty cannot be attained, we must be governed by probabilities. Probabilities are, in such cases, as legitimate rules of moral action, as certainties in other cases; and we are, as imperatively, bound to be governed by them.

The kind of evidence by which the scriptural authority of infant baptism is proved, is not what many have demanded, and is not what many have thought necessary. But it is such as God has seen fit to give, and ought, therefore, to be satisfactory. God's plans are, in many respects, different from what appears to us desirable. If he had taken counsel of us, he would have had to remodel his word

altogether. But neither in the kingdoms of nature or of grace, has he taken our officious advise. In both departments of his agency, he has acted on principles which we can only imperfectly comprehend, and produced anomalies which we cannot account for.

Many things enter into the divine plan which we would have excluded from it, and many things are left out of it which we would have comprehended in it.

Some things are explained in the scriptures, with a greater fulness and particularity, than to us appears necessary, other things are proportionably too obscure. Here, God has said too much to suit us; there, too little. In the opinion of some, it was incumbent on God to make every thing to which his word appertains, so obvious, that reasoning and investigation would not be necesary to a right understanding of it.

The most superficial interpretations of the scriptures, are sure to be adopted by such, as the most probable; and all the results of profound and protracted reasonings, are discarded.

This assumption of the simplicity and obviousness of divine truth, is the baseless fabric of imagination. It is true of a part of divine truth, but not of the whole.

God has not so constructed his word, as to save men the necessity of the most profound and extended investigations of which they are capable, in the interpretation of it.

Why God has not made every important truth obvious, in the scriptures; why he has made it necessary to ascertain and teach them, in many cases, by means of protracted courses of reasoning and argu-

ment, it is not necessary to explain. Such, however, is the fact. And the man who, from indolence or any cause, will not investigate; and he who, from mental imbecility, cannot; must both inevitably fail of reaching many profound and interesting, and many valuable results, which are fully reached by the unprejudiced and laborious interpreter.

There is a demand for profound and extensive processes of reasoning, in respect to all the diversified objects of human knowledge. The jurist, the legislator, the chemist, the mathematician, the natural philosopher and the historian, must attain many of their most important and most valuable results in this way. The interpreter of nature, in this respect, finds himself in circumstances precisely similar to those of the interpreter of the scriptures.

By means of such demands, the human mind is called into exercise, and its higher powers essentially improved. Having invested man with vast capacities for the attainment of knowledge, by extended processes of reasoning, it is fit, that demands should be made, for the full exercise of these capacities; otherwise, they would be undeveloped and useless.

The fact, that no record of the first institution of Christian baptism is preserved, and that the scriptural instructions, respecting this ordinance, consist, entirely, in allusions and references to it, as already well understood, both in respect to its nature and its subjects, accounts for the want of direct evidence in regard to the proper subjects of this rite. These facts are undeniable, and deserve to be well considered.

Scriptural allusions and references to Christian baptism made, not for the direct purpose of explaining it, together with church traditions and uninspired

testimony, are the only sources of information to us on matters which may have been settled, by the most explicit unrecorded instructions of our Lord and the apostles.

The law respecting baptism as originally given, was doubtless clear and explicit. No questions seem to have agitated the church on this subject, during the apostolic age.

What that law was, we are left to infer from several indirect evidences, because the law itself has not been made a matter of record Some infer, that infants were, in this law, included as legitimate subjects of baptism. Others infer, that baptism pertained only to adults.

Both opinions are matters of inference, not of specific scriptural testimony. Both are inferences, not from any scriptural record of the divine law relating to baptism, but from incidental references to baptism, in which it is mentioned, not for the purpose of being explained, but for the purpose of being enforced and for other purposes

Hundreds and thousands of members of the church testify, that their early conversion was owing, directly or indirectly, to their baptism received in infancy. Hundreds and thousands of its parents testify to the effectual influences of the Holy Spirit in turning their hearts to their children, to instruct them in the doctrines and duties of Christianity, by means of obligations which they acknowledged and in part assumed, when they consecrated their infant offspring to God in baptism.

What is the inference? Is not that which God blesses, of God? Is it not conformable to his will? Does not his blessing give it his sanction? Then, infant church-membership and infant baptism, are of

God, for God's richest and most signal blessings are on them.

Exclusive of the purpose of explanation, the question between the baptists, and other denominations, is not a question between a hypothesis sustained by direct evidence, and another hypothesis sustained by indirect evidence. It is a question between two hypotheses, both of which depend upon indirect evidence; both of which are inferred from the scriptures; neither of which is contained in them, otherwise than as a conclusion is contained in the premises from which it can be legitimately deduced.

The conclusion in favor of the baptism of infants, is inferred from several different independent premises. If these premises are correct, and the conclusions legitimately drawn from them, the doctrine of infant baptism is fully sustained. If this is true in the case of any one of the foregoing arguments, infant baptism is fully sustained, even if all the other arguments are shown to be inconclusive.

The want of direct evidence creates a necessity for more extended and discriminating investigations than would otherwise be necessary. It also occasions, after the lapse of eighteen centuries, a liability to error, which might not otherwise have existed But it does not render the attainment of certain conclusions impracticable, neither does it render erroneous opinions on the subject inevitable.

In the absence of direct evidence, we resort to that which is indirect, of which we find a sufficiency for the full establishment of affusion and sprinkling as the mode, and of believing adults and their children as the subjects of Christian baptism.

CHAPTER XVII.

DUTIES OF THE CHURCH TO INFANT MEMBERS.

I. DUE RECOGNITION OF INFANT CHURCH-MEMBERSHIP.

§91. The doctrine of infant church-membership, with infant baptism as its seal, is a cardinal point in the Christian system. It affects, essentially the organization of the Christian church. The churches which reject this doctrine, organize themselves on a plan entirely different from that which God has instituted.

The adoption of infant baptism, without a full recognition of infants as being thereby introduced into the church and entitled to its care, is but little better than the entire rejection of it. It is a conformity to tne letter of the divine law on this subject, but a violation of its spirit.

The conclusion at which we have arrived, in favor of the baptism of infants, is not a matter of mere speculative interest; it is of the greatest practical importance. The design of God is, that children should participate equally with their parents in the blessings of church organization and discipline. He claims as his subjects all adult Christians, and extends to them the benefits of his jurisdiction, and of the system of moral and religious discipline which he has instituted. He also claims equally the children of the church, and requires them to be trained up and instructed in all the doctrines and duties of

Christianity. He requires them to be trained up not merely to know, but also to do his will, and to perform the duties which he has enjoined as constituting his service.

The responsibility of giving children this training, is devolved, in the first place, upon their parents, and in the second place, upon the church to which they belong.

The church is as much bound to provide for the instruction and edification of its infant members as for those of adults. It ought to do this by its officers as it performs other corporate duties. How sadly and how criminally this church care of children is neglected, in the different branches of the Presbyterian church, is well known! Children are baptized, and then, so far from receiving the church attention due to them as members of that body, in most cases, their membership in the church is never afterwards acknowledged. If they see fit to take their places among the other members of their respective congregations when they come to be adults, they do it by profession not by confirmation. In this manner, their church connection is virtually nullified immediately after it is created.

To baptize children and then deny them the privileges of church discipline, is, in some respects, more criminal than not to baptize them at all. By it, the very purpose and design of infant church-membership, and of infant baptism, is, in many cases, entirely and in others partially defeated.

The conclusion in favor of infant baptism is inseparably connected with the doctrine of the church-membership of baptized children. If we baptize our children, and thus initiate them into the Christian church, we are bound to recognize them as church

members, and extend to them the benefits of church discipline.

This cannot be done without early instructing baptized children in the principles and ordinances of Christianity, and confirming them, on their own professions, in the enjoyment of church relations and privileges.

This is done by the Episcopal church, and, in doing it, that church acts consistently. Why is it not done by all pedo-baptist churches? Ought not confirmation to be extended as far as infant baptism extends? The inconsistency of practicing infant baptism, with no subsequent recognition of the church relations of baptized children on the part of the church, is too obvious to be denied. It has done much to prejudice the cause of infant baptism with unbelievers, as well as to defeat its ends.

The most spiritual portions of the Episcopal church baptize their children, instruct and edify, and then confirm them. Why should we not do the same? The introduction of confirmation would not require any depression of our existing standards of qualification for church-membership. We might examine our candidates for confirmation on the state of their affections and dispositions, as well as on their faith and knowledge, and receive only such as should have entered on a course of evangelical obedience.

We are not at liberty to be negligent in this matter. Church order is of God's appointment, and must be maintained and carried out according to his design. If we will not maintain it, and carry it out, others will. God will intrust the cardinal interests of his kingdom with such, and with such only, as shall prove themselves worthy of this trust. If we decline to execute his plan, he will take his institu-

tions ultimately from us and give them to others. Already has God frowned upon our remissness in respect to the lambs of his flock. Many of them have been lost to our denomination. Many have been lost to the church altogether, whom a reasonable fidelity would have saved.

God will admit of no substitute. Sabbath schools have done much for children. They are good auxilaries; but they are not an adequate substitute for church discipline. God will never allow them to take the place of the church.

II. CHURCH DISCIPLINE OF INFANT MEMBERS.

§ 92. 1. This devolves, in the first place, on the parents, who, in the Presbyterian church, stand as sole sponsors for their children, in assuming the obligations of the baptismal covenant. It is the duty of parents to train up their children in the way of piety, both by religious instruction and government. This training ought to be commenced at the earliest period in which it is practicable, and ought to be prosecuted with the utmost earnestness till its objects are secured.

2. If parents prove negligent and remiss, it is incumbent on the church to admonish them, and call them to due performance of their duty. If it does not succeed in this, it becomes its duty, as far as possible, to supply the deficiency of parental instruction and government, by means of its officers and other members, but especially by its stated ministry.

3. Children, having been duly instructed and governed, when they arrive at years of discretion, are entitled to be admitted, on a profession of their

faith, to the full enjoyment of all church privileges. This, in the Episcopal church, is distinguished from the admission of unbaptized persons, by the title of confirmation. As some distinction ought evidently to be made between it and the admission of unbaptized persons; and as confirmation answers the purpose of making such a distinction, it would be well to introduce it generally wherever infant membership is recognized. The confirmation of infant church-members ought to take place at as early a period as the children can be duly prepared for it. Some may he confirmed at twelve years of age; others at 15, and others at later periods. It ought to be called *confirmation in the church*, not admission to it. By calling it confirmation, we recognize the subjects of it as already church-members; by calling it admission to the church, we virtually deny the previous membership of those so admitted, and discard the doctrine in conformity with which that membership was constituted.

4. If from neglect on the part of the parents or of the church, or from any other cause, children on attaining years of full discretion, refuse to be confirmed, and to adopt christianity as a rule of life, they should be cut off from the church by the same authority by which other unworthy members are removed. This may be done with more or less formality as may seem best. It ought, however, to be done by authority, and in an orderly manner, so as to be understood both by the church from whose fellowship such persons are separated, and by the persons themselves.

These four particulars embrace the essential principles of the discipline of children in the church of Christ. They are all legitimate deductions from the

doctrine of infant church-membership. If infants are admitted to the church by baptism, they become therefore, church-members, subject to church discipline; and cannot lose their standing in the church, unless deprived of it by the due exercise of church authority.

III. REFORMATION DEMANDED IN RESPECT TO CHURCH DISCIPLINE OF INFANT MEMBERS.

§93. It was predicted by Malachi, that before the advent of the Messiah, Elijah, the prophet, should be sent to turn the heart of the fathers to their children, and the heart of the children to their fathers. This office was performed by John the Baptist. Matt. 11: 14. Is not a similar mission now necessary to secure to the children of the Presbyterian church in its different branches, that attention, and those privileges to which they are entitled?

Many considerations conspire to call our attention to the church relations of children and to the discipline which is due to them as church members.—Our responsibility to God faithfully to carry out his plan in regard to children; our responsibility to our children to do the most we can for their early conversion, and for their general conversion; our responsibility to the church of which we are members, to make its greatest perfection and enlargement are of this description. There is a part of the gospel camp that we have not sufficiently fortified. God has made provisions for the salvation of our children, but we have not fully availed ourselves of those gracious and abundant provisions. 'Let us awake to our duty. Let us arise and build up our

church; one of the noblest in other respects that can be found; but in this respect, weak and negligent. Several other denominations are before us in attention to their children, and in a recognition of their title to church privileges. The Episcopalians are before us. The more spiritual branches of that church are far before us in this respect. Even the Roman Catholics exercise a wisdom and fidelity in respect to their children which ought to clothe us with shame and humiliation. Their children are brought up in the church and for the church. We claiming to be wiser and purer than they, and discarding many of their traditionary errors, have hitherto neglected to profit by their examples of wisdom and fidelity in a matter which pertains to the fundamental principles of church order and prosperity. There must be a reformation among us in respect to that part of our organization and usages which relates to children. Weakened, as we are, by our deficiency in this respect, we can never secure to our religion its proper ascendency among men. God will be compelled to cast us aside, and commit his work to other orders, or we shall be compelled to carry into effect, and carry out that part of the Divine plan which relates to infant church-members, in conformity with the letter and spirit of the New Testament.

CHAPTER XVIII.

MISCELLANEOUS TOPICS RELATING TO BAPTISM.

1. CHRISTIAN NAMES.

§ 94. Giving children names in baptism, has been handed down by tradition from ancient times. It probably had its origin simultaneously with Christian baptism itself. Such names are called Christian names; because they are given at the time of the administration of baptism, and designed to distinguish the subjects as consecrated to the worship and service of God.

None but a baptized child, has, properly speaking, a *Christian* name. Others have names which designate them as individuals; but the names of those who are baptized in infancy, designate them not as individuals only, but as Christians, as individuals consecrated to the worship and service of Christ.

The Christian names of persons baptized in infancy, are perpetual mementos of their consecration to God.

Paul bore the name of Saul till his baptism. His Christian name was Paul. It does not appear, however, that a change of name was considered necessary in cases of adult baptism. It was probably at the option of the subject.

II. POSITION PROPER FOR RECEIVING BAPTISM.

§ 95. In the case of adults, baptism may be received by the subject either standing or kneeling.—Kneeling, however, is the most suitable posture for receiving it; because it is the most humble and respectful posture. Examples of kneeling in religious worship, occur both in the Old and New Testaments. Daniel knelt in his customary family devotions.—Dan. 6: 10. Paul knelt and prayed with his Ephesian brethren on the occasion of his celebrated valedictory address, recorded Acts 20: 36. The reception of baptism by an adult, is the most solemn act of his life. If we ever ought to kneel, we ought to do it on that occasion.

Infants are most appropriately baptized by being taken in the arms of the officiating minister. This is in conformity to the example of Christ, who took little children in his arms and blessed them.

III. TIMES AND PLACES PROPER FOR ADMINISTERING BAPTISM.

§ 96. Infant baptisms ought evidently to be administered at an early period. In the case of circumcision, the eighth day was fixed upon as the earliest period practicable for the administration of that rite. Reasoning from analogy, we may safely conclude that infant baptism ought to be administered at the earliest period practicable. We are not limited to the eighth day, but we are restricted to the earliest convenient season. The propriety of having infant baptisms administered at the earliest conveni-

ent season is too obvious to require comment or argument. Those who defer having their children baptized from one convenient season to another; and thus suffer months and even years to pass away in the neglect of their duty are guilty of culpable remissness.

If it is God's will that infant baptism should be observed at all, it must be his will that it should be observed promptly. Remissness and unnecessary delays, imply a low estimate of this duty; and an imperfect apprehension of the binding force of God's laws. A due sense of the binding force of God's laws, will not allow us to be remiss in respect to any duty which he has enjoined.

The proper place for the administration of baptisms both in the case of infants and adults, is the church of God. If we have no churches, our usual places of holding religious meetings become churches, so far as the essential purposes of church edifices are concerned.

Baptisms ought to be administered in the presence of church congregations, and not in private, except in extraordinary cases; because the entire congregation has an interest in it. The baptized child is admitted as a church-member, and the church is laid under obligations to it as such. The service ought to be performed in the presence of the church, that it may assume those obligations voluntarily and understandingly.

IV. AMOUNT OF WATER TO BE USED IN BAPTISM.

§ 97. Some use water in baptism so sparingly, as hardly to represent either a washing or sprinkling.

A secular washing requires the free use of water. Sprinkling is an emblem probably derived from the falling of rain, and represents the Spirit of God as poured out like the rain upon the baptized subject. It represents not only the pouring out of the Spirit, but the communication of those gifts and graces which the Spirit confers, as if they descended upon us from on high. As the rain washes the objects which it falls upon, and cleanses them from defilement, so baptism represents the Spirit of God as distilling upon us from on high, to such an extent as to effect our cleansing from all sin, and entire removal of our guilt. This may be signified by the use of very little water; but it is much more strikingly represented by using water with considerable freedom and in considerable abundance.

Some use a single affusion or sprinkling, and some repeat these applications of water three times. These seem to be sufficient reasons for repeating them:

1. We are baptized to the three persons of the Trinity.

2. The verb baptize is a frequentative verb, and, as such, signifies not a single, but a repeated application of water.

V. BAPTISMAL FORMULA.

§98. The formula for administering baptism, taken from Matt. 28: 19, is as follows:

"I baptize thee *to* the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost."

To ought to be used in this formula instead of *in*, for reasons already explained.

In the Episcopal service, the parents and sponsors promise, in behalf of the infant subject which they present for baptism, three things; repentance, faith, and obedience. They also promise to renounce Satan according to a formula referred to by Tertullian, as made use of in his day. This is done in answer to questions proposed by the officiating minister, and is sustained by an appeal to 1 Peter 3: 21, where the answer of a good conscience implies that candidates for baptism were questioned respecting their faith, and required to return satisfactory answers.

In the case of adults, a profession of faith is generally insisted on, as an essential qualification for baptism. In the case of infants, the same thing is required of the sponsors in behalf of infant subjects, by the Episcopal and some other churches; but by the Presbyterian church it is omitted.

VI. HISTORICAL NOTICES OF CHRISTIAN BAPTISM SINCE THE DAYS OF THE APOSTLES.

§ 99. In the third century, the original modes of baptism had been generally superseded by immersion. No account is transmitted to us of the manner and grounds of this change. It is easily accounted for, however, by the fact, that the great body of Christians who used the Greek language, the language in which the New Testament was written, understood it as used by the classic writers, and not as used by the Jews; and that, interpreted according to classic usage, baptize meant to immerse or plunge in water.

Besides, it was the disposition of the people in those times, as it is more or less in all times, to make additions to the simple forms and modes which God has established. The simplicity of God's modes is their highest beauty and excellence. But the great mass of human minds do not think far enough to perceive this. They therefore prefer something greater in amount or more complex than what God requires. The burden of the Mosaic ceremonies appears to us to have been great; but it was not so great that the Scribes and Pharisees did not think best to make it much greater by their traditions.

So the early Christians were no sooner left to themselves by the removal of the Apostles, than they began to make additions to the simple rites of Christianity.

Contemporaneous with immersion, we find anointing with oil, exorcism of evil spirits, and the Christian uniform made use of on the occasion of receiving baptism. No one can tell the origin of these rites. They came in silently during the second century. The first that we know of them is that they were in use, and apparently in general use. But they were not of apostolic or divine origin. The New Testament knows nothing of them, and gives them no countenance. Neither does it know any thing of immersion as a mode of baptism.

Immersion, when once established, continued to prevail, generally, for several hundred years, when affusion and sprinkling were re-established in the Roman Catholic church. The Greek church has continued to adhere to immersion till the present time. The leading Protestant sects withdrew from the Papal church, and brought off sprinkling and affusion with them as customary modes of baptism.

Infant baptism was generally practiced in all the ancient branches of the Christian church. Peter de Brugs founded a small sect in Languedoc and Provence, in 1110, who denied the propriety of infant baptism. But this sect never became numerous, and its peculiarity in respect to baptism was not widely disseminated.

Immediately after the commencement of the Reformation by Luther, the Anabaptists arose in Germany, who held to immersion as the only mode, and adult persons as the only proper subjects of baptism. They were organized under Munster, Stubner, and others, as a distinct faction, in 1521. They were highly fanatical; discarding civil government, distinctions of rank, and the institution of private property, for which they proposed, after the plan of some more recent innovaters, a common stock.

After having contributed more or less to fan the unparalleled excitement of those times, and after having come on several occasions in conflict with the civil authorities of the countries which they wished to reform, they gradually declined and became extinct. Out of their ashes, however, arose, Phœnix like, the modern baptists.

These abandoned the fanaticism of the Anabaptists, and contended simply for immersion and adult baptism, to the exclusion of infants.

The first particular Baptist church of the character of the modern Close Communion Baptists, was organized in London, in 1633. In 1650 these churches began to form associations and to hold epistolary correspondence with each other, in different countries. In 1689, they held a general assembly, in which one hundred congregations were represented.

The first Baptist church in Scotland was formed in 1765. The leading peculiarity of the Scotch Baptists was a plurality of pastors in each church. This, however, has been generally given up.

The first Baptist church in America was formed by Roger Williams, at Providence, Rhode Island, in 1639.

At present, the Baptist denomination is numerous and respectable in this country and in Great Britain, and prevails to a limited extent in some other countries.

Besides the leading Baptist denomination, there are several minor sects, who concur with them in respect to baptism, while they deviate more or less from them, and from the other orthodox churches, in other respects. The most important of these are the Campbellites, who claim the title of Disciples.

Sprinkling and affusion, and infant baptism, prevail throughout the Presbyterian and Congregational churches, the church of England, the Episcopal church of the United States, the Lutheran church, the Reformed churches of Germany and other parts of Europe, the Methodists, both regular and reformed, and the Roman Catholic church. Infant baptism prevails in Greek churches, and in the other Eastern churches.

VII. PRESENT ATTITUDE OF THE BAPTISTS.

§ 100. The Baptists have assumed an attitude of confidence and determination in regard to their peculiar views, which renders it highly necessary for those who properly understand the subject, to exert themselves for the diffusion of scriptural principles on this subject. Their missionaries are translating

the Bible into different modern languages, and promulgating their views, by means of these translations, in different quarters of the globe.

They have assumed it as an unquestionable fact, that the nations of the earth must now look to them, and to them alone, for faithful translations of the word of God. Their Foreign and American Bible Society, declares the versions of other denominations to be essentially defective, and purposely to keep out of sight the real meaning of words. It charges the American Bible Society and the British and Foreign Bible Society, with having virtually combined to obscure at least a part of divine revelation; and circulate versions of the Bible which are unfaithful, so far as the subject of baptism is concerned.

They also hold, (Baptists,) that those who are baptized by sprinkling or affusion are unbaptized, and not to be recognized as church-members; and exclude all such from the Lord's table. They thus conspire, both against the truth on this subject, and against the unity and prosperity of the church of Christ.

We are not at liberty to suffer men to imbibe these errors, or to remain in them, without using every practicable means of their preservation and recovery.

The immersionist errors, are the basis of one of the greatest and most injurious schims in the church, that has ever occured. This schism ought to be healed. It can be healed. The subject of baptism is difficult. Men cannot master it in a moment. But it is level to the capacity of common minds, provided the evidence is duly arranged and exhibited.

We are not at liberty to say, that baptism is only of minor importance, and that if men are only converted, it makes little difference what opinions they

embrace on this subject. Those errors which create an extensive schism in the church of Christ, are productive of more evil than language can express.

Viewed in the mildest light possible, the Baptists are schismatics. They divide the church of Christ. They repel their more correct brethren from the Lord's table, as unbaptized. They claim not to be a branch of the church of Christ, but to be Christ's only church.

During the last fifty years, the Baptist cause has gained a vast amount of strength. It is strong now, and becomes increasingly so, by the supineness and apathy of those to whom a knowledge of the scriptural system, in respect to baptism, is committed, not only that they might enjoy the same, but that they should impart it to others.

CAUSES OF THE SUCCESSFUL PROPAGATION OF BAPTIST ERRORS.

§ 101. There are several reasons for the little success which has hitherto attended the endeavors of the church to maintain and diffuse, more generally, the scriptural doctrines respecting baptism. The principal of these are the following.

1. *Apathy and indifference to the subject.*

Multitudes regard it as of almost no consequence. They do not even teach what they know of it to their baptized children, still less to their neighbors. When this is the case, is it strange that their children are easily misled; and that their uninstructed neighbors, should be carried away with the confident asser-

tions and plausible reasonings of the Baptists? This is by no means strange. It is what ought to be expected. It is what ought to take place. Supineness and apathy ought to suffer defeat and humiliation, even in a good cause.

2. Making undue concessions.

Too much, a great deal too much, has been conceded to the Baptists, and they have availed themselves, largely, of these inordinate concessions. Their true position is that of schismatics, dividing the church and family of Christ. This, however, is generally kept out of view, in the opposition which is made to their other errors. Let us embrace the truth. Then let us make no concessions subversive of it.

Some of the inordinate concessions, made by persons of other orders, to the Baptists, are the following:

1. That immersion is, probably, the scriptural mode of baptism, but that other modes will answer the same purpose.

If immersion is, probably, the scriptural mode of baptism, let us adhere to it. Let us not be wise above what is written, or suppose that we can improve upon the methods adopted by divine wisdom.

2. *That immersion, though not the scriptural mode of Baptism, is nearly as good as that, which is scriptural.*

The unity of the church is essential to its honor, peace and efficiency. In order to unity, there must be agreement, as far as practicable, both in modes of worship, and in doctrinal opinions. There must,

especially, be agreement in all those modes which are deemed fundamental, whether they are so or not.

Immersion is deemed fundamental by the Baptists. Hence, they regard and treat all the rest of christendom as unbaptized, and as apostates from this essential part of Christianity. In every point of view, therefore, the Baptist errors are injurious. They are a departure from truth, and the basis of an extensive schism in the church.

3. *That there is no great harm in neglecting Infant Baptism.*

If infant baptism is not of Divine authority, it ought not to be persisted in. If it is of Divine authority, it ought by no means to be neglected or lightly esteemed. The feature of the Divine economy, however, on which infant baptism is engrafted, is one of the most interesting which it possesses.—Infant baptism is a seal of grace bestowed on the children of the saints through the use of appropriate means by their parents and guardians. This was a principle of the Patriarchal and Mosaic dispensations. It is equally a principle of the Christian dispensation. Grace is bestowed on the children of the saints.—From them the ranks of the church are usually filled. They constitute a large proportion of those who are converted early in life to the Saviour. The children of the church are its hope for the future existence and prosperity of the Christian religion among men. They are its hope for the conversion of the entire world.

But in order to secure the grace of God for them, we must devote them to him in baptism. If we neglect this, we forfeit the blessing. If we neglect it

wilfully, the forfeiture will be likely to be taken at our hands, and the grace which is the source of unnumbered benefits in this world, and which brings eternal life in its train, will be likely to be withheld forever. The ordinances of religion are not to be trifled with. They are appointed as so many channels for the conveyance of spiritual blessings. By attending upon them, we put ourselves, and in the case of infant baptism, put our children in the way of receiving inestimable benefits not to be obtained by any other means.